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TRUTH IN THE WELL.

BY FRANK J. OTTARSON.

> "Truth lies at the bottom of the well."
> *Ancient Proverb.*

They told me Truth was in a well;
  I looked to see your face so fair:
What disappointment me befell,
  To find my face alone was there!

So you were false, while I was true;
  And then my life-dream passed away;
Hope's visions, all of amber hue,
  Were broken—and the sky was gray.

Beneath that gray sky, roaming on,
  I pace the wide world round and round
The light of life for ever gone,
  And bearing one unhealing wound.

I look in all the lakes and wells,
  I gaze into the soundless sea;
One face alone my sorrow tells,
  One only true—ah, me! ah, me!

A FATAL INHERITANCE.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," THE "RIVAL SISTERS," ETC.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

A SCENE OF VIOLENCE.

A bright southern sun shone over a venerable homestead, magnificent, and complete in all its details. The stately building arose to three stories in the centre, with dormer windows in the highest one, and wings, two stories in height, stretched out on either side, the whole connected by wide verandas that completely encircled the house.

That was built of brick, which time had toned down in color till the walls wore a russet hue, that harmonized with the venerable looking trees which mingled their branches on the park-like lawn, and grouped together in the rear, forming a woodland through which wound many pleasant paths leading to picturesque points of view.

A carriage drive wound its graceful way to the front entrance, bordered with azaleas in full bloom, the different shades of color, from white to deep scarlet, so arranged as to offer the most pleasing contrasts to the eye. The yellow jasmines emitted a delicious perfume from their delicate bell-shaped flowers, mingled with the sweet odor of the myrtle.

But the object most worthy of notice, in approaching the house, was a magnificent live-oak which stood in the wide expanse of sward around which the road wound. The girth of this tree was immense, and from its gnarled and knotty stem branches extended horizontally in every direction, shading a space of more than a hundred feet in extent. At the extremities these branches curved downward, each one bearing long wreaths of Spanish moss, its pale gray tint and feathery lightness contrasting with the vivid green of the spring foliage. Picturesque as this mighty monarch of the grove was, all its beauty was not seen till the boughs were put aside, and the lover of the picturesque stood in the vast forest cathedral formed by its drooping branches, with their long lines of pendant moss. The bright sun glinting through the upper portion of the tree, lighting up the tangled web of moss, boughs and trunk, was reflected below, relieving the sombre gloom of the area thus heavily shaded.

In this shadowy temple rustic seats had been placed, and in front of one was a table, the supports of which were made of twisted saplings, and the top was a smooth slab of cedar inlaid with small squares of walnut wood, forming a mosaic pattern. A child's toys were scattered over this, and from one of the tree boughs a swing with a basket chair in it was suspended.

Reclining in this was a little girl about three years of age, fastened securely in her nest by a scarf of scarlet silk, which was wound more than once around her dainty little figure. The infant was a perfect bud of beauty, with a look of precocious intelligence which seemed strange on so young a face.

Her brow was broad and low, shaded by rings of brown hair, and her eyes were of the darkest shade of hazel. Her complexion was of the soft creamy hue of the magnolia flower; and, in full development, the little Lucia Layton promised to be that rarest and most attractive type of feminine beauty, a southern blonde.

Born to wealth, high position, an ancient name, queen of all who approached her in her regal babyhood, the future of this cherished child was to become a tangled labyrinth, winding among paths too rough for those tender feet to wander through without deepest suffering. A sinless victim to a bad man's spite, the clouds were already darkening over that infant head, and the storm making ready to burst in all its fury.

A middle-aged negress, dressed in a gay calico robe, with a scarlet turban on her head and immense gold rings in her ears, moved the swing gently to and fro, speaking in petting tones occasionally to its occupant, and then striking off again into a lullaby she was fond of singing to her charge:

"Hush, my baby, don't you cry;
Your sweetheart 'll come bimeby.
When he comes all dressed in yaller,
Then you may know his love is shaller;
When he comes all dressed in blue,
Then you may know his love is true.

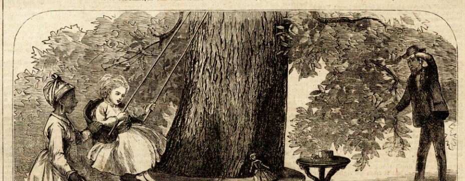
"You'll have plenty on 'em a comin', honey, for you'll be as pretty as a picter, an' you'll have heaps an' heaps o' money. Massy on me! I do wonder ef dat is de marster comin' tramplin' in here like a elefink. Thar he is, sure as shootin', an' he looks mad enough to go to doin' suffin dreffle."

The branches of the tree were torn rudely asunder, and a tall, well-formed man strode into the open space within. His dress was of handsome material, but worn in a careless, slovenly manner, and his feet, as they fell heavily on the sward, seemed scarcely under his own control. One glance at his flushed face and gleaming eyes showed that he had been drinking heavily, and a second one would have satisfied an observer that he was dangerous when in that condition.

His lips were slightly distorted, showing his large white teeth set firmly together; his hands were clenched till the nails almost pierced the flesh, and to the cowering negress he looked like some huge animal making ready for a deadly spring upon his prey.

The sudden gloom into which Edward Layton had plunged rendered objects indistinct for a few moments, and he stood till his eyes became accustomed to the semi-twilight that reigned in this temple not made with hands; but he was by no means quiet during that interval: he was crying out in furious tones, that came brokenly from between his locked teeth:

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



EDWARD LAYTON IN SEARCH OF HIS WIFE.

"Where is she? Where is my wife? Where is the woman who took me for my gold? who loved another man best when she married me? Where is she, I say? for I have come to settle with her for the deception she practiced on me! Oh-h-h! I know it all now! I see how I was duped—what a fool I made of myself for a pretty face. But she shall rue the day she ever saw me—she shall—she shall, or my name's not Layton!"

By this time he could distinguish objects, and the swing with its tiny occupant, and the dusky face of the frightened nurse stood out clearly before him. Layton made a stride toward them, tripped over a root, and came near falling on his face. The woman had placed herself between him and the infant; but the little girl, aroused from the half slumber in which she had been lying, raised her head at the sound of the loud talking, and lisped:

"Papa—poor papa—tipsy adin—fall on de dass. Don't e come nigh Luty; bad boy, papa."

By this time Layton had recovered his equilibrium, and with drunken gravity he came near the swing and looked down on the child. He roughly said:

"But suppose I choose to come—choose to take you in my arms, and carry you away from this gloomy den—what can you do to help yourself, eh, my little doll?"

"I kin bite 'ou—pinch 'ou; an' I 'on't tiss 'ou."

"I dare say the young tiger-cat is ready to show its claws," he said, with a besotted laugh. "You're true grit, Luty; you've got none of your mother's coward blood in you, and that is why I love you, if you are her child. Come, little one, I want you to go with me. Put up your arms, and hold on to my neck."

"I *'on't* do," was the energetic response. "'Ou fall—'ou hurt me."

"But you *shall* go; so there, Miss," and he put out his unsteady hand to grasp her; but she uttered a piercing shriek and clung to her nurse.

With trembling fingers the woman had been trying to loosen the scarf which held the child in its place, and having accomplished this, she turned to her master, and said:

"She's more used to me, Marse Edward, an' I'll take her whar you want her to go to. She's a bit wilful, an' mebbe I'd better carry her along."

"Wilful is she? Then it's high time she was broke in. I don't intend to have rebellion in my house. I—I'll be master of it, and of all that live in it. Come to me, I say, Lucia, or it will be the worse for you."

The child looked earnestly into his eyes, and that expression of premature intelligence before referred to, came into her young face. Both fear and resignation were mirrored in her eyes, for this baby had already learned that when her father spoke in that tone, there was nothing but obedience left. She seemed to comprehend that, in his present condition, he was an irresponsible being, and with a shiver of dread she lifted her arms, and suffered Layton to take her in his embrace.

He staggered a few steps toward the opening by which he had entered, the slight weight of the little girl evidently as much as he could stand under; and in mortal dread lest some accident to her nursling should result from this mad freak, Cassy, the nurse, followed the two closely till they gained the entrance to the sylvan bower.

Layton then stood aside, and ordered her to part the waving lines of moss that hung as a screen almost to the earth, and while she did this, he improved the opportunity to taunt the little creature on his breast.

"Where are your kicks and your pinches now, Miss Pert? You have found out who is your master, I think; and somebody else shall find out that I am hers too, before she is many days older."

"You an't no master. You'd better 'have your own se'f, an' let me go to my mammy," said the fiery little creature, raising her head defiantly. "You's tipsy—dat's what you is, an' you an't fit to hold me."

In a sudden paroxysm of fury, the drunken man threw her violently from him as he cried out:

"Then go, you little vixen! You're finely taught, and, parrot-like, repeat every word you hear said."

The child uttered one cry as she fell, which was echoed by that of the nurse, who rushed toward the little white heap that lay motionless upon the turf, stunned or killed, she could not tell which, by coming so violently in contact with the earth.

For a moment the purple flush faded from Layton's face, and he was partially sobered by what he had done; but when Cassy lifted the child, and she was evidently struggling back to life, he brutally said:

"I've given her a lesson that will do her good, and it won't be the last one either, unless she is taught to speak more respectfully to me. You, and your infernal mistress too, had better be on your P's and Q's with me, or you'll get no better treatment at my hands than the brat's received. Take her to the house, and look after her. I dare say she's bruised a little."

"Oh-h!—look! look!" cried Cassy, with tears streaming from her eyes. "My poor little darlin's arm hangs limp, like it was dead. Is it broke? Is it broke, I wonder?"

Layton made a step toward them, and passed his hand over the injured limb; he almost carelessly said:

"It is only badly sprained. I will send for the doctor to set it right, and you had better hold your cursed tongue, if you know when you are well off. Do you understand, Cas? The child fell accidentally of course."

The woman bent her head, afraid to express her feelings, lest she might bring chastisement upon herself, and the man strode away as steadily as the condition of his limbs permitted, in the direction of the house.

He called loudly for a servant, and in a few moments a negro lad was galloping away at the top of his speed to bring the neighborhood physician to look after the injury the heiress of Layton had suffered at her own father's hands.

If he was sorry for what he had done, Edward Layton did not betray it when he returned to the boon companion he had left sitting on the corner of the piazza, with wine and cards on the table before him.

The man who sat there and watched the half-reeling figure that approached, was the cousin of Layton of Layton, and the next heir to his estate, should there live no children to inherit it. There was little resemblance between James Crimin and the master of Layton. Crimin was a small, active looking man, of bilious temperament, and saturnine complexion. He was dark and sallow, with deep set black eyes, overshadowed by heavy brows, and a cynical mouth. A pointed mustache stiffly waxed stretched out like wings across his upper lip, and beneath his chin a small tuft of beard was permitted to grow.

It was a hard and malicious face, and the look with which he watched the approach of his kinsman was worthy of Mephistophiles himself. He laughed softly, and then muttered:

"He has almost done for himself already. Five years he has kept me out of our uncle's fortune, but it won't be much longer that I'll have to wait. As to the child, *she* sha'n't long be in my way. I'd get rid of her as I would of vermin, if *he* was safely disposed of. I give him three months more, and that's a long lease for one who breaks down as fast as he does. Strange how it is, that strong men like him burn up directly, and run into mania from drink, and a wiry fellow like me can stand it as I do; but then I use wine only, and he has lately taken to absinthe. *That* makes him the devil he is in his cups.

"I wonder what he has been saying to Alice now; something to make her cringe and shiver, for I told him that story about her romantic attachment to Guy Preston to set him off against her. I knew he had never heard a word of that before I enlightened him to-day, and I could see the demon rising in him as I spoke. Pretty Alice—proud Alice, I think I shall be even with you for all the scorn you have shown me, before I am done with you and yours."

By this time Layton had ascended the steps, and was approaching the table at which Crimin sat. He threw himself heavily on the chair opposite the tempter who was leading him on to ruin, and wiped the drops from his brow, as he said:

"I wish I hadn't done it, but I don't think she's much hurt. Such a light creature could not fall very hard."

"Eh? What is that? Haven't been knocking your wife down, I hope. Vulgar—too low for a Layton—for you claim to be a gentleman, you know."

A fierce gleam of anger came into the eyes of the other, and he clenched his hands savagely.

"*She* kept out of my way, and it is well she did, for I do not know what I might have done if I had found her there. I don't know what I may do yet when I look in her false face again. I went down to the place she takes refuge in with her child when I am—*as I am now;* but I only found the little one and the nurse."

He paused, and Crimin said, with a strange look:

"You surely did not attack a baby like that! and she your only child and heiress too!"

"I—I was beside myself with anger at her pertness. I was going to bring her here to make her dance among the glasses and sing for you, but the little minx told me I wasn't fit to carry her, and I—I—threw her on the ground. Her arm was sprained, but I think that was all. You heard me calling Jeff, and—and—he's gone for the doctor."

"And you have come back here to besot yourself still further, after half killing your child!" said Crimin almost disdainfully. "What will her mother say when she knows what you have done?"

"Curse her! what do I care what she says? I had almost learned to hate her before you told me about Preston, and now I will keep no terms with her. I've threatened to kill her more than once, and now I believe I shall really do it."

"Ah! bah! threatened people live long. Besides, I shall advise Alice to take her child and leave you to your own devices. It is the only course I can see for her, and after what you have done to-day, I think she will feel herself forced to adopt it."

Layton stared at him blankly. After a pause, he said:

"She may go, and welcome, but she shall not have the child. She is my heiress, and I have the best right to her. *You*'re a pretty friend, to talk of advising my wife to leave me!"

Crimin calmly replied:

"For your sake it is the best thing I can do. I do not wish to have so near a relative indicted for the murder of his wife, and if you go on as you have lately it will come to that in the end. Ho, ho! I wonder what our uncle would say if he could rise from his grave and see how his pattern nephew has acted since he has had money at his command. The lucky youth could not stand prosperity; it *is* a touchstone to some natures."

"Jem, you are a demon," cried Layton, shaking his clenched fist toward the speaker. "If the old man could see me now, he would curse me as a traitor to his blood and name; but he would equally denounce *you* as the tempter who has led me on to destruction. From the day I was thrown under your influence you have spared no efforts to drag me down to the base level to which I have fallen. If I had no child to inherit my estate, I should be tempted to believe that you are trying to destroy me, that you may get the fortune my uncle willed me to possess."

Crimin listened with flashing eyes and curling lip. His sallow face flamed with anger, and then grew very pale; but he controlled himself sufficiently to speak with cynical calmness:

"It would be but a waste of breath to defend myself against such absurd charges as you have just brought forward, Ned. We have been reared together from boyhood, and have always been fast friends. But for me, I think you would have gone to the bad at a quicker pace than you have lately tried. I have stayed near you that I might help your wife to keep you in bounds, and if it had not been for our joint efforts you would have destroyed yourself before this time."

Layton braced himself against the table, and with utterance which had suddenly become thick, said:

"You may go to the blazes, and leave me to take care of myself, if you please. As to—to my w-wife, I—I'll settle with her, and let her know th-that she's not to get you n-nor any one else to help her to manage me. I—I'll do as I please, if I die for it."

"'A willful man will have his way,'" quoted Crimin, with a half smile; "and if you have made up your mind to the fate that threatens you, I am sure I shall say nothing against it. I'll go, since you wish it, but not to such warm quarters as you proposed. What will you do for some one to play *écarté* with you when you are deserted by me? I believed myself as necessary to you as the air you breathe—as the absinthe you drink; yet you order me off in this unceremonious fashion."

While they talked Layton had drank more than once from the decanter before him, and his head now fell on the table helplessly, while he muttered almost inaudibly:

"B'lieve c-can't spare you, after all—play presently—win b-back-k—"

The voice ceased, and he was sound asleep.

CHAPTER II.

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

Crimin arose and looked down with scornful eyes upon the degraded man he had long labored to bring to such a pass as this. With subtle power, he had worked upon the plastic nature he had to deal with, till Layton was as wax in his hands. He might rebel at times, and say rude things, but he invariably came back to the feet of his tempter, and was ruled by him more completely than before.

The two cousins had been reared together under the guardianship of an eccentric bachelor uncle, who from the first made no secret of his intention to leave his beautiful home and the greater part of his fortune to the nephew that bore his own name—the son of a brother who died early in life.

James Crimin was the son of a sister who was also dead; but she had married a man much beneath her in social position, who brought her to poverty. On her death-bed she sent her young son to her brother, with a prayer that he would receive him in his house and educate him.

Layton of Layton would not throw the lad upon the world, for his father had disappeared, and there was no one to look to save himself, as the friend of the helpless boy. He accepted the charge thus thrust upon him, but his heart never opened to the new inmate of his family.

"He is no Layton," said the proud old man. "He is his father's son, and I am sorry to say it, for the Crimins are poor stock, poor stock, and the boy is no improvement on them. I'll do the best I can for him. He shall be educated and started in life, but that is all. He must fight his own battle. No son of John Crimin shall ever enter Layton as its master. The estate shall go with the old name, and my brother's son shall be my heir."

He adhered to this determination; and when his death took place, five years before this time, it was found that Edward Layton inherited his magnificent estate, consisting of a small principality in lands, with numerous slaves to till them. Ten thousand dollars were bequeathed to James Crimin to give him a fair start in life, as the testator expressed it.

Both the young men had graduated in a southern college, and Crimin commenced the study of law; but he was idle, fond of excitement, and addicted to gaming and drinking. At his uncle's death he abandoned his professional aspirations, and became a hanger-on at Layton, exercising over its new owner the power a strong and scheming mind is sure to win over a weak and willful one.

Crimin proposed a tour to Europe, which was eagerly assented to by the wealthy young planter, and together they travelled through France, Italy and Germany, lingering longest at the popular resorts for gaming, where Layton was often victimized by men who shared their gains with his cousin.

On their voyage home, the two were thrown into intimate companionship with an American family, consisting of father, step-mother, and a young daughter who had been living in Bordeaux with a relative for several years.

Alice Snowden was sixteen, with all the sweet charms of budding womanhood, and both the young men were strongly attracted by her beauty and vivacity. The handsome Layton won his way easily to her good graces, but her manner to Crimin was always cold and reticent. Alice could scarcely have explained to herself the repulsion with which this man inspired her, for she could not then know that in him she beheld the dark fate who was to pursue her relentlessly through so many years of her life.

In spite of Crimin's efforts to prevent such a consummation, the passion of his cousin for the young stranger culminated in an offer of marriage before the ship reached New York, an offer which was eagerly accepted by Mr. Snowden and his wife; and Alice, too young to understand her own heart, was persuaded that she was the most fortunate of girls to win the favored position to which Layton of Layton could elevate her.

With a trembling heart and a few bitter tears she accepted the impetuous lover, who wooed more as a master than a suppliant for her favor; and in less than two months after her return to her own home, she left it as the bride of Edward Layton.

Dazzled by the brilliant future that seemed to be opening before his daughter, Mr. Snowden made few inquiries as to the habits or moral character of his proposed son-in-law, and a child in years, Alice was given into the keeping of a man who was already a confirmed, though secret inebriate.

At night, in the privacy of his own apartments, Layton indulged to excess in wine; and while in Paris he had acquired a taste for the deadly absinthe which maddens the brain and saps the physical strength of those who indulge in its use.

Before the honeymoon had passed away, Alice knew that she was the wife of a man who not only drank till he became wild and dangerous, but who was tyrannical in temper and careless of her happiness. The task she had set herself, to learn to love him, to make his home pleasant to him, was put aside with a sinking heart and dismayed spirit. Her lot was cast, and she tried to make the best of it; but she often recoiled from her husband, in spite of her efforts to bear with him and excuse him, as she believed a wife should. The poor child had high ideas of duty, and she believed her place was by the side of this man, though she was often afraid to be left alone with him, lest he should do her some mortal injury in one of his furious paroxysms of senseless rage and brute power.

When they were established at Layton, Crimin came as a guest, but he stayed on from month to month, welcome to both husband and wife; for he affected to take sides with Alice, and he did indeed often protect her from the intrusion of her husband, when he was in his most violent moods.

Grateful to him for such aid as he rendered her, a tacit alliance was established between the two, the object of which was to exercise such control over Layton as to prevent him from injuring himself or others while temporarily deprived of reason. But a secret dread and dislike of Crimin was still in the young wife's heart, in spite of all her efforts to overcome it. The former feeling deepened after the birth of the little Lucia, for Alice had more than once detected the sinister gaze with which he regarded the child, when he believed no one was observing him; and with a shiver she remembered that this frail young life would, in the event of her husband's death, be the only barrier between him and the Layton estate.

Four years had passed away since her ill-omened marriage, and Alice Layton still clung to the home she had accepted, wretched as it had been made to her. Proud, sensitive, refined almost to fastidiousness, this lovely woman was linked to degradation in the person of her husband—of the man too whom she would not voluntarily have chosen, but who, as her husband, possessed the right to claim obedience and consideration from her while the wretched bondage should last.

She rarely appeared in society, though the neighborhood was a gay and wealthy one, and on her first appearance in it as a bride, she had met with a most cordial welcome. But the habits of Layton were a fatal bar to social intercourse; she preferred solitude to the mortification of having others see the condition to which the master of the house was often reduced, and she rarely appeared in public, except to attend the neighboring church.

Cassy, the negro woman who had accompanied her from her father's house, was her only friend, and the retreat beneath the great oak tree the only place in which she was comparatively free from the intrusion of her husband, when he was not in a fit state to be considered as a companion.

The future fate of her child was a heavy weight on the heart of Mrs. Layton. Lucia was getting old enough to observe, and resent the rudeness with which her mother was treated, and already had her father shown symptoms of alienation from her. He was habitually rough with the child, and many times had the mother's heart quivered with pain when she saw her slight and tender darling tossed recklessly to and fro, at the imminent risk of breaking some of her slender bones. It was a favorite pastime of his to force Lucia to dance on the table on which glasses, decanters and cards were promiscuously placed, requiring her to move among them without disarranging them, and a failure to accomplish this was sometimes severely punished.

The little girl was resentful, and young as she was, her tongue was often keen in its half-uttered words. This had led to more than one scene of violence, but never before this day had Layton been brutal in his treatment of the child, who, to all the rest of the household, was as a baby queen.

Half an hour before the angry raid made by Layton on the retreat sacred to herself and child, Mrs. Layton had gone to visit a favorite servant who was confined to her cabin with fever; she believed her husband to be too deeply absorbed in his game and his potations to think of herself or Lucia, and she left Cassy to amuse and care for her during her own absence, with no feeling of dread as to what might happen while she was away.

She was now walking slowly and pensively toward the stately mansion which had become a dreadful prison to her, thinking of what she should find there, and how she would pass through the ordeal that she knew awaited her, for Layton had suffered from *delirium tremens* more than once, and for days past he had been drinking to such excess that she knew his debauch must end in that terrible malady.

A feeling of intense dread and horror crept over her as she drew near the only home she could claim on earth, for in her father's house, with the children of her step-mother, she knew she would receive a cold welcome if she was finally driven from the shelter of her husband's roof.

It might come to this she felt, with a shivering sense of desolation and helplessness, for Layton's violence had more than once imperilled her life, and to save herself and her daughter she might yet be compelled to fly from him and conceal the place of refuge she must find.

As she moved through the winding avenues of her beautiful home, clad in dainty apparel, many might have envied Mrs. Layton the lot in life that had been awarded her; but there were few with whom this young and lovely woman would not gladly have exchanged positions, provided she could have secured a peaceful life, free from the degrading influences that now surrounded her.

Alice Layton's face was very sad as she mused thus on her hopeless fate, but it was a singularly sweet and attractive one. The features were regular; the brow broad and low; the eyes a lucid hazel, fringed by long lashes a few shades darker than the shining braids of amber-colored hair that crowned her well-shaped head. Her exquisite mouth was made for smiles, though it now wore an expression of weary sadness which was almost pitiful on so youthful a face.

The figure was tall, well developed, and graceful in all its contours, and her step was light and elastic, in spite of her heavy heart. Such a woman should have been the pride and the light of her home, the joy of her husband's life, for her mental gifts were not inferior to the beauty of her person, and her tender heart would have attached itself to the man she had been given to, with scarcely any volition of her own, if he had treated her with any show of kindness or affection.

The story told by Crimin to her husband that evening, for the purpose of arousing his insane wrath against his wife, had little foundation in truth. Guy Preston was the son of one of her father's nearest neighbors, and the two children had attended the same private school and shared their studies together.

Guy had called her his little wife, and Alice had accepted the title in childish fantasy; but in the two years of her absence from Snowden Manor his image had partially faded from the girl's memory, and when she was told to accept the brilliant offer made to her by Layton, there was certainly no remnant of her early preference for Preston to stand in the way of the worldly marriage that had been arranged for her.

Crimin's motive for the pretended revelation he had made was to drive his cousin to some new act of violence which would convince Alice that it was no longer safe for herself or her child to remain beneath the roof that sheltered her husband.

He was weary of the monotony of the life he led, and if the long suffering wife could be driven away, he could then induce Layton to collect around him a band of choice spirits, and their orgies would soon close in the death of the man he was so anxious to remove from his path.

Layton once dead, he would marry the widow, and have the fate of the infant heiress entirely in his power. Such was the programme this bold, bad man had settled for himself, and he did not doubt that he would have power to induce Alice to accept the hand he intended to offer her when she was once freed from her tyrant.

Mrs. Layton had passed a few yards beyond the large gate that opened on the road, when the click of the latch arrested her attention. She raised her head, and turned to see who was about to enter, and an expression of surprise came into her face as she recognized the family physician.

She paused till he came up to her, and with one of her rare smiles, said in a sweet-toned voice:

"Good-afternoon, Dr. Bland. I have just been to visit Katy, and found her better. You have called to say something to me about her condition, I suppose?"

The physician, a sober looking elderly man, lifted his hat, and replied:

"I was on my way to her cabin, when I met Jeff with a message from Mr. Layton to come here immediately, as—as—my services are needed."

The sudden blanching of her face caused him to falter in his speech. With effort, she asked:

"Who—who needs you, Doctor? Is my husband ill?"

"No-o, Madam; I think not. The—the child has fallen and hurt herself, but not seriously, I believe. The accident must have happened after you left for Katy's cabin."

She did not stop to hear his last words. Like an arrow sped from a bow, she darted away toward the house, panting, breathless, dreading she scarcely knew what.

Crimin, walking leisurely along, met her in her headlong course, and forcibly arrested her by seizing both her hands.

"Stop, Alice, I entreat. I came to meet you to tell you what has happened. Your child is hurt, but she is in no danger. He," pointing disdainfully toward the besotted figure on the piazza, "went in pursuit of *you*, and finding her with no one to protect her but Cassy, he attempted to force her from her retreat. The little fire-fly stung him with her sharp tongue, and—and—it is no use to conceal the truth from you—he threw her from him, careless of what she might fall on, and her arm was badly sprained. That is all, upon my honor."

"*All!*" she repeated in a hollow tone; "and is not that enough to rend my heart? My baby—my precious darling, tossed down in drunken rage, at the risk of killing her! I have borne much, *much*—ah! God alone knows how much!—but this passes endurance. Let me go, James, for I must see with my own eyes what has happened to my child. Dr. Bland is coming; bring him to my room as soon as he alights. I have outstripped him, I see, though he is in his carriage."

She wrenched her hands away, sprang up the steps, and rushed wildly toward her own apartment, where she knew she would find Cassy and her charge.

The little girl was lying on a lounge in front of an open window, moaning faintly, and the nurse was kneeling beside her, holding the injured arm tenderly with one hand, while with the other she bathed the pallid little face with cologne.

With swift steps Mrs. Layton approached, and bent down over her suffering child. Her face was so pale, her eyes so wild, that Cassy was frightened. She deprecatingly said:

"It wa'n't my fault, Miss Alice. She's better now, and I don't think she's hurt much, 'cept her arm. That'll soon be right when the doctor comes."

"Oh, Cassy!" wailed the poor mother, "why didn't you run away and hide my baby, when you heard her father coming, and I wasn't there to shield her from him? I never dreamed that he would seek her there, or I would never have gone away and left her."

"You knows then," said Cassy, in a tone of relief. "I wouldn't ha' dared to tell you, caze the marster threatened me ef I did. I s'pose Marse Jeemes told you, but ef he saw him do it, he might ha' come out an' showed some feelin' about the poor abused baby."

"Yes; he told me. *He* has no love for my child, and if she had been killed outright he would not have cared. She is in his way, Cassy, and I begin to think that he is playing a double part between me and my husband. He pretends to be my friend, but I fear him more than I trust him."

"An' with good cause too," muttered the woman. "He's deep an' he's dangerous, but 'tan't no use settin' her more agin him, caze we can't git along 'thout some white man 'bout the house when marster's in one of his drinkin' bouts."

Lucia unclosed her eyes at the sound of her mother's voice, and faintly said:

"Pretty mamma, don't leave me din. I's hurt. Bad papa—frow me down. I won't love him never no mo'."

Her mother would have snatched her to her heart, but she forbore, fearing to cause pain to the injured limb, and a moment later Dr. Bland came in, followed by Crimin.

When the arm had been examined, the doctor said:

"It is a severe sprain, but the bones are uninjured except the little finger; that is broken. How did the accident happen?"

"She had a bad fall," began Crimin; but Mrs. Layton turned to the physician with erect form and flashing eyes, and said:

"You and your wife are my friends, Dr. Bland, and it is my purpose to tell you the truth, and ask of you such advice as you would give a daughter of your own, placed in the difficult and painful position I occupy. It is no secret to *our* world that my husband is a drunkard—that he is a madman when excited by liquor; but no one save myself knows what I have borne with from his hands. My pride has hitherto recoiled from betraying his ill-treatment to the outside world, but now I cast it in the dust—I throw all reticence aside. The life of my child has been imperilled by his recklessness, and I feel that my first duty is to her. Her father, by what he has done to-day, has forfeited all claims on me, and I will no longer dwell beneath the same roof with him. I risk Lucia's safety by doing so, and to me she is the most precious of all earthly creatures. Lucia was thrown to the earth by Mr. Layton, and you see the condition in which she lies. Now tell me if I will not be justified in removing her far away from the man who had no respect for her tender years—her utter helplessness?"

Dr. Bland listened to this impassioned appeal with eyes that shone with sympathy, but he softly said:

"I will speak with you later, Mrs. Layton, when you are less excited; now I must attend to my patient. The little creature bears pain like a heroine, I must say. Oh, it was a cruel thing to do, but your husband was hardly responsible."

"I shall hold him responsible," was the firm reply. "No man has the right to madden himself with drink, and claim immunity for the crimes he may commit while under its influence. I have endured the last indignity he shall inflict on me; but of that hereafter. Now let us see what injury my baby has sustained besides those already known. She may be a cripple for life from the fall she has had; you must examine her condition thoroughly, Doctor, and even if you assure me that all is right, I shall be uneasy about her for weeks to come."

"You need not be, my dear Madam, for I am a skillful anatomist, and I can soon satisfy myself as to the injuries she has actually sustained."

"Do so then without further delay, if you please, Doctor," was the brief reply; and she began to loosen the child's clothing with trembling fingers.

Crimin left the room with a glitter of triumph in his eyes. At last was the spirit of resistance aroused in this woman, who had passively borne so much ill-treatment from the husband who had sworn to love and cherish her. She could endure her own wrongs, but when her child was made the victim of his brutality, she could be like a tigress in her defence.

The domestic traitor felt as if the object he had so long labored for was attained, for he knew Alice Layton well enough to feel assured that after speaking as she had to Dr. Bland, no inducement could be held out to her to remain under the same roof with her husband.

The Rubicon was crossed—the vail was torn by her own hand from the ghastly skeleton which could no longer be concealed from the gossipping outside world, and this proud and reticent woman was at last goaded to the point toward which he had been slowly driving her from the first day she greeted him as a guest in her house. He strolled into the drawing-room, and lounging in a cushioned chair, glanced complacently around, thinking what a grand seigneur he would be when he was the possessor of all the elegance that surrounded him.

The room was wainscoted from floor to ceiling, the panels elaborately carved, their sombre effect relieved by paintings glowing with the richest tints of color. The old-fashioned windows had been enlarged, and light draperies of embroidered lace, mingled with folds of scarlet damask, still further brightened the large apartment. The mantel was of marble exquisitely sculptured, and the fire-place was lined with highly colored tiles.

Lavish expense and fine artistic taste were exhibited in the adornment of this apartment, but it had been scarcely used since the first months of Layton's marriage: it was the grand reception room, and the mistress of all this splendor no longer gathered her friends and neighbors around her.

Crimin took in all the details with his covetous eyes, and presently muttered:

"I will have it all, *all;* even the dainty wife shall be mine, if strong will can conquer fate."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

DIGBY'S REFORM CLUB.

A SKETCH FOR WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

There was a quartette of free and jovial spirits in Burville, and John Digby was the acknowledged leader thereof. Peter Slade, and Tom Lowden, and Sam. Pepper were his associates. They were four young men, free-hearted and generous, with great capacity for enjoyment. On a certain Monday evening they were assembled in the small parlor of Lushton's tavern for the purpose of having a good time, as they were wont to assemble often. The season was winter, and the beverage they were indulging in was a compound of rum, sugar, milk, and egg, familiarly known among the initiated as "Tom and Jerry." At an early stage of the wassail, before sense had been submerged, Peter Slade suggested that he had a complaint to make against one of the dignitaries of the town, and there upon he opened his vials of denunciation upon Parson Meekly, the old clergyman of the place.

"As near as I can find out," he said, "the parson just about the same as called us by name, and held us up as a set of graceless scamps."

"Not quite so bad as that," said John Digby. "He did certainly allude to us very plainly; but the worst he brought against us was, that we were prostituting noble powers and opportunities to base and sinful purposes. Rather flattering, I thought—especially the 'noble powers.'"

"Flattering with a vengeance," growled Tom Lowden. "What business is it of his?"

"Aye," chimed Sam. Pepper, "what business is it of his? And then look at the hullabaloo they're making over this foreign mission business. It was in connection with that that Parson Meekly attacked us. They'd better look at home. I think we've suffering enough under our very noses that had better be looked out for first."

"That's so," cried Slade. "I say, 'charity begins at home.' What do you say, John?"

John Digby had listened attentively, and during the conversation he had turned his glass bottom upward upon the table.

"There may be truth in what you say," he slowly and thoughtfully replied; "but people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. We may object to furnishing our money for these foreign missions upon the plea that charity begins at home, and all that; but the question may come back—What have WE done for this charity at home? What have WE done toward alleviating the distresses of the poor of our own town? And if we haven't done anything in that direction—if we don't open our hands in charity at all—what right have we to say in what direction others shall aim their good works?"

Blank were the looks that greeted this speech. The trio of listeners were taken aback. They hadn't expected this from their leader.

"Now look here, boys," continued John Digby, pushing his inverted glass away to the centre of the table, and leaving it there, "I don't like this overhauling that Parson Meekly gave us any better than you do, and I propose to shut him up."

"Hi-yah!" shouted Sam. Pepper. "That's the talk. I'm with you."

"Are you sure you've got the courage, Sam.?"

"Yes, *sir!*"

"Count me in," said Tom.

"And me," added Peter. "Let's shut the old fellow up. What's the programme, Jack?"

"Well," answered Digby, soberly, "I have planned that we will take the wind out of Parson Meekly's sails by establishing a Reform Club of our own, and starting a Missionary Society on the same basis."

"Eh?"

"Look ye, boys,—people besides the parson are talking pretty hard about us, and we'll shut them all up in a lump. I'd like to astonish 'em. I'd like to hit back in the most effective way. I'd like to make 'em take the back track here in Burville in their own business."

His hearers were interested, and listened eagerly.

"What is it?—Tell us how it's to be done?" they asked.

"Have you got the courage to do it?"

"We'll follow you," said Peter Slade.

"Honor bright?"

"Yes."

"Then listen."

"Hold on," cried Sam. Pepper. "Let's fill up before you commence."

"Not with old Lushton's Tom and Jerry," returned Jack. "We shall want the cost of it for another purpose. Turn your glasses bottom up for the present. There,—that's a go. Now listen. We are in the habit of meeting here at the tavern three evenings in the week; and our expenses for liquor and cigars are at least two dollars an evening, aren't they?"

This was admitted by a nod.

"And in addition to this I spend at least a dollar more each week for beer and tobacco on my own hook. How is it with you?"

The others acknowledged that a dollar a week was little enough.

"Thus," resumed John Digby, "we have ten dollars a week as the result of our combined and individual expenditure for rum and tobacco. I, for one, think I could manage to live through the rest of the winter without any more of it; and for the sake of the experiment I would be willing to put my share of that ten dollars a week to a charitable use. Here it is in the beginning of December, and the winter has opened hard. There are poor families not far away which we can bless with our sympathy and our help. We might organize a benevolent society, or a missionary society, upon our own hook. Do you begin to understand?"

They understood him perfectly; and, since he would lead, they were ready to follow. In fact, they rather liked the idea. There was a charm of novelty and originality about it that captivated them. It would be fun to purchase flour, and meat, and tea, and sugar, and fuel, and go around and assist the poor and the needy. They were young men, full of life and good feeling, and had caroused only because of the fun of the thing. Here was promise of fun in another direction, and they would go for it.

The matter was discussed, and finally settled. They would make a square week of it at the beginning.

"During the week," said Jack, "we will look up the cases of destitution and suffering, and on next Saturday afternoon we will meet and compare notes. Then we will take our ten dollars, and do what we can for those who are suffering most. We must be methodical in this. We are not to spend a penny in this work of charity which is not saved by the cutting off of some useless expenditure of our own; and he of us who buys a cigar through the week shall deduct it from his contribution on Saturday."

"If we would be methodical," suggested Peter, "we must organize. I say, if we are going to do anything of this kind, let us do it ship-shape."

Peter's proposition was unanimously accepted, and thereupon they proceeded to organize. The organization arrived at was very simple, but nevertheless effective. They elected John Digby to serve as President, and as Treasurer, and as Secretary; and then they elected an Executive Committee of four, consisting of John Digby, Peter Slade, Tom Lowden, and Sam. Pepper. And then they settled their bill at the bar, and went home.

Saturday evening came, and the Reform Club met at Digby's shop, and each member was ready with his report. They were sober and thoughtful. They had thought, when they separated on Monday evening, that they should meet with the spirit of frolic in their new work; but the scenes which they had witnessed in the interim had changed the current of their feelings entirely.

"My soul!" exclaimed Sam. Pepper, "I never dreamed what sorrow and suffering there was right here in our little town. Last night I went down to the Widow Bashlot's, and I found her, with a sick child, absolutely freezing and starving."

"And I," said Tom Lowden, "found poor old Uncle Ben. Driscoll and his wife both in the same plight. The old man is down with the rheumatism, and when both he and Aunt Sally sat and cried like babies with fear of going to the poor-house, I tell you, it brought the tears to my eyes."

And so the reports were made, and then they planned how they could best use their ten dollars. It seemed like a drop in the bucket when set against all the suffering and want they had found; but it would do something.

On that Saturday evening the Widow Bashlot bent over the bed of her sick child with weeping and with wails of anguish. The howling blast piped without, and the keen frost nipped within. She suffered because she had not yet brought herself to beg. For herself, she would rather die than become a pauper; but for her child—"Oh! God have mercy!"

A wailing cry like this had burst from her lips, when the tramp of feet at her door attracted her attention, and presently a gentle rap followed. She answered the summons, and found four young men upon the stoop. She knew them well, for they had been school-mates with her son who had gone away to sea and never returned. And they came into the house, and they brought with them wood and provisions; and they piled up the fuel upon the hearth until the bright flame leaped and roared; and the sick child stretched out its wasted arms to embrace the genial warmth. And they brought forth bread, and tea, and sugar, and butter, and cheese.

"All right," said Sam. Pepper, who regarded these as his especial charges, in answer to the widow's ejaculations of amazement. "We are John Digby's Reform Club; and we are going into the missionary work; and such folks as you are we want to convert—want to convert you from suffering to comfort if we can. So keep up a good heart, and let us do for you what your own Willie would have done if he had lived. It'll be comfort for us. We'll call often. You sha'n't want if we can help it."

The widow's sobbing, bursting return of gratitude, and her eager, heart-sent prayer of blessing cannot be reproduced by tongue or pen. When the young men had reached the highway Sam. Pepper burst forth,—

"Boys, as true as Heaven, I wouldn't exchange the blessing of that poor widow's heart for all the joy that ever came in the old way at the tavern. There's something more than fun in this."

And his companions agreed with him.

In another part of the town, on the outskirts of the village, in a poor, thatched hut, lived Ben. Driscoll and his wife Sally. In other years they had been well and happy, and though never forehanded, yet they had not known want until old-age and sickness had deprived them of the ability to work. And on this cold winter's night Uncle Ben. and Aunt Sally sat and shivered over the embers of such poor stuff as they had been able to gather from the snow-covered hedges, and the old man sighed as he thought of the alms-house. "If we could only get through the winter! But who's to help us?"

And Uncle Ben. and his wife were aroused from their stupor of chill and hunger by the tramp of feet and the hum of voices; and very shortly the door of their cabin was opened, and John Digby and his companions entered. A fire speedily blazed upon the hearth, and a goodly store of provisions was opened upon the table.

The old man wondered, and Tom Lowden made answer,—

"It's all right, Uncle Ben. This is Jack Digby's Reform Club. We've stopped our rations of spirit and tobacco, and are going to invest the result in a missionary enterprise. We want to convert you and Aunt Sally if we can."

"Convart us, Tom?"

"Aye,—convert you to comfort and peace; and, perhaps, also convert you to the belief that there's a grain of good left in humanity still. We mean to take you in hand for the winter, and you sha'n't suffer if we can help it."

The boys didn't leave the cot until they had helped the aged couple to a hearty meal, and had piled up fuel enough to last until they came again; and when they finally withdrew the song of blessing was sounding in their ears.

And so the reformers went on until their night's work was done, and when they came to separate they declared that they had found such enjoyment as they had never known before.

During the succeeding week three new members were added to the club—men who were willing to cut off expense for rum and tobacco and devote the proceeds to the relief of the poor and distressed of the town.

And ere long Digby's Reform Club became a noted institution in the town. The projectors thereof could hardly credit the evidence of their own senses in contemplating the results of three months' labor. Two and twenty members had joined, and the fund for relief amounted to almost forty dollars a week, as each man was pledged to pay in weekly the exact sum his spirit and tobacco had cost him. If he continued to use tobacco he took a lower place in the company, and the use of spirit as a beverage was sufficient cause for expulsion. When people saw the great good that was being done, they were anxious to give their aid, and be counted in with the happy crew; but the laws of the club were fixed,—no money could come to its fund except such as had been saved by the donor from the conquest of some evil habit, or the cutting off of some useless luxury.

It was a bright Sabbath in spring-time, and it had been told that Parson Meekly was going to preach a sermon upon Digby's Reform Club, and the old meeting-house was filled to overflowing. The clergyman read his text from St. John's Gospel—"*Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Come and see.*" And when he had told the story of Digby's club, and pictured the good results of its labors, he proclaimed to all—"Go ye, and do likewise."

Once John Digby and his compatriots had fancied that it would be a proud moment when they had brought the old clergyman to recognize the worth of their labors; but the blessings of those upon whom their bounty had fallen had made such sweet music in their ears, and the satisfaction of duties truly done had dropped so soothingly upon their souls, that they found no room for that baser pride which they had aforetime anticipated.

* * *

—He that speaks doth sow; he that holds his peace doth reap.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A Fearful Picture.—"Mr. President!" exclaimed a member of an Arkansas lyceum—"Mr. President! our country's fate looms darkling before us, without a star above the horizon on which the patriotic mariner can hang a scintillation of hope, but with ominous features of fast-coming doom, gloomy and rayless as the eyes of a tree-toad perched upon the topmost bough of a barren poplar, enveloped in an impenetrable fog."

It having been reported that a gentleman living in Lafayette, Ind., was heard pounding his wife's mother one morning, a correspondent of the Indianapolis *News* came to his rescue as follows: "The fact that a mouse spent the night in making his nest in Mr. ——'s right boot, occasioned all the stamping the next morning, and gave rise to the report that he was reconstructing his mother-in-law."

A father in Maine, feeling that a young man was staying rather late in the parlor, and wishing to give him a polite hint thereof, went to the head of the stairs and called out, "Here, young man! Isn't it about time that you were going? Do you know that it is eleven o'clock, and that you are burning out my gas?" The young man left, and has not returned.

A strong-minded woman in Detroit made the following reply to a politician who had called at her house to get her husband to go to the polls and vote: "No, sir, he can't go! He's washing now, and he's got to iron to-morrow; and if he wasn't doing anything he couldn't go. I run this 'ere house, I do, and if any one voted it would be this same Mary Jane."

A London advertisement, calling for a wealthy old man who has been missing longer than he should have been, describes him as "wearing a brown wig and a deep red scar over his left eye," with "large yellow teeth dressed in black with a dark gray overcoat." It ought not to be difficult to find a man dressed in that style.

Two little girls slept in the same bed, and in the morning one of them said to the other, "Did you hear it thunder last night?" "No. Did it thunder?" said the other. "Yes, awfully." "Then why didn't you wake me up?" was the petulant response, "for you know I never *can* sleep when it thunders!"

A man recently broke off a marriage because the lady did not possess good conversational powers. A cynical friend, commenting on the fact, says, "He should have married her, and then refused her a new bonnet, and then he would have discovered her conversational powers!"

A man, in arguing for the privilege of being dishonest, said to his clergyman, "The fact is, it is impossible for me, if I am strictly honest, to carry on my business and live in this world." "Die, then," was the minister's uncompromising reply.

Smart Boy—"Papa, is it fair for the teacher to flog me for what I don't do?" *Indignant father*—"No, my son—no, by no means!" *Smart boy*—"Well, then, what made him flog me to-day when I didn't do my sums?"

A book was recently published in England, entitled "Lectures to Married Men." We supposed it was the general impression that married men have always had lectures enough without taking them in book form.

An Idaho invalid was ordered by his physician to take three ounces of brandy a day, and being informed that sixteen drams make an ounce, he has patiently taken his forty-eight drinks a day ever since.

When Shakespeare wrote about patience on a monument, did he refer to doctors' patients? No. How do you know he didn't? Because you always find them under a monument.

At a school examination the other day, the teacher asked one of the "advanced girls" why the noun bachelor is singular. "Because he don't get married!" was the prompt reply.

A gentleman who had been arguing with an ignoramus till his patience was exhausted, said he didn't wish him dead, but that he should like to see him *know more*.

An Alabama editor's pistol having been stolen, he advertises that if the thief will return it, he will give him the contents, and no questions asked.

Caution to dairymen—Catch your butter-flies late in August. Select the large yellow ones, if you want to produce fine yellow table butter.

It is said that Mr. Tease, who was recently married to Miss Cross, teased her so much that she promised not to be Cross any more.

Can a man who is treated to ale be said to be *malt*reated?

CURRENT ITEMS.

A man out in Nevada, who took a dose of strychnine by mistake, and escaped to tell the tale, describes the sensation of dying by this process. It is enough to deter any person in his senses from selecting that mode of committing suicide. He says he felt a succession of shocks and convulsions, each worse than being broken on the wheel; and after suffering terrible torments for a period that seemed of infinite duration, he finally sunk into unconsciousness, from which he was rescued by the utmost exertions of a skillful physician.

A Heartless Practical Joke.—A few nights ago, a man living in St. Albans, Vt., made an effigy of a child which had died a few days before, and placed it on the door-steps of the parents' dwelling, where they saw it the first thing on opening the door in the morning. The heartless creature thought it was a capital joke until the indignation of the people taught him other wise.

A confidence operator who was released the other day from the House of Correction in New Bedford, where he had been confined for three years, immediately called on a benevolent old lady, and by a specious story wheedled her out of an order for a new suit of clothes, but fortunately she learned the rascal's true character in time to countermand the order.

A young man touched off a fuse in the Winneconne, Wis., silver mine, and was rapidly pulled up out of the shaft in a bucket. When nearly up the rope broke, and down he fell for forty feet. The blast then exploded, but instead of being blown to pieces, he escaped the whole affair with only a few slight bruises.

As a salute was about to be fired by the Republicans at Hazardville, Ct., Wednesday night, after the election, and the cartridge was being rammed home, it exploded, fatally wounding Daniel Bates, who was standing in front, tearing out one eye, and blowing off both arms, and fearfully burning the whole body.

A distressing case of suicide occurred in Tallahassee, Fla., recently, when a young woman, suffering from mental depression, saturated her clothing with kerosene, and then set fire to it. Her friends, hearing her screams, rushed in and extinguished the flames, but she died in the greatest agony, in a few hours.

A man named Harding was found dead in a ditch, in Dracut, near Lowell, on Thursday morning of last week, with over a dozen stabs in his head and neck, any one of which would have proved mortal. A companion who was seen drinking with him the night before was arrested as his murderer.

It is reported in the Philadelphia and Boston papers, that in a fashionable church in this city, a slate, containing a list of the weddings to be celebrated during the week, is hung in the vestibule every Sunday for the benefit of the young ladies of the congregation.

A boy fifteen years old, living in Ellsworth, Me., was passing a loaded pistol to one of his playmates on Sunday of last week, when it was accidentally discharged, and the contents lodging in his breast, inflicted a wound of which he died in a few hours.

At New Albany, Ind., the other day, arsenic was accidentally used instead of soda in making up some bread, and a family of several persons were all poisoned; but remedies promptly administered will probably restore them.

A party of hunters in Massachusetts are reported to have killed fourteen thousand four hundred and forty chipmunks in one day, besides a number of crows, woodpeckers, and other winged game.

A few days since, as two men were driving in buggies, in opposite directions, at East Brookfield, Mass., they had a collision, and each horse was so badly wounded by a shaft, that both of them died.

A woman in Columbia county Wis., who discovered her little boy on the top of a wind mill, fell dead from fright. The boy came down of his own accord without injury, but a motherless child.

A Big Blast.—A solid block of granite, weighing four and a half millions of pounds, was thrown out by a blast in a Maine stone quarry, the other day.

A gentleman living in Holden, Mass., was attacked by a bull, on Friday evening of last week, and gored so badly that he died in a few minutes.

One day last week a petrified rattlesnake was found imbedded in a solid stone, in a quarry at Greenville, Ky.

THE MOUNTAIN FARM.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

From the top of the road, through the gap, is seen,
Down a zizzag road cut up by rills,
The velvet valley, cradled between
Dark doubled ridges of pine-topped hills;
And just beyond, on the sunniest slope,
With its windows a-glint in the sunset warm,
Is the spot where I first knew life and hope,
In the grand old home of the Mountain Farm.

Here are the rambles where, long ago,
With a beautiful playmate oft I roved,
When life and youth wove a roseate glow,
And, loving, we hardly knew that we loved.
There is not a scene but recalls her to me—
The rock-ribbed lake with its blue-black gleam,
The pine-clothed hills with their roar like the sea,
And the meadowy reach by the reed-checked stream.

There is the grove of chestnuts tall,
Where we broke the nuts from their thick-spiked hulls,
Or loitered to hear them, like rain-drops, fall
O'er the dry, brown leaves in the windy lulls;
And the ancient orchard we threaded so oft,
With the cool, sweet spring by the stunted thorns;
And the half-ruined barn, with its flushed hay-loft,
Where we hunted for eggs in the cool, clear morns.

And the path that winds to the farm-house good
Was weedy and way-worn then, as now;
And then, as now, the gnarled knoll stood,
With the wind-mill perched on its sombre brow.
But, alas! there glimmers behind the hedge
A shape that was then to these scenes unknown:
I could almost sink on my knees at the edge
Of this grassy mound with its gray head-stone.

A ghostly grace of the days that are gone,
A sad, sweet light of the soul that is fled,
Haunts my steps like a vanished dawn,
And around the scene like a glamour is spread.
And the Indian summer on slope and lea
Lies hazy and mellow, and lazy and warm;
But never again as it was, can be
The deep-secluded Mountain Farm.

* * *

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A MUTUAL ENLIGHTENMENT.

Dr. Parfitt, the keeper of the Retreat in Huntingdonshire, where the unfortunate Carmine Moer had so long been confined, followed his telegram to London with all speed, taking the earliest train, and quartered himself at the Queen's Hotel, opposite the Post-office, in St. Martin's-Le-Grand.

This was upon Thursday, the day in which Darrel Moer had called upon Sir Hugh Tregaron, at Lady Thaxter's residence, and some few hours subsequent to that memorable interview.

The doctor waited all that evening for the appearance of Bing, but the tall, lank figure of Moer's valet did not rejoice his vision. The next morning he went forth and made some effort to find Bing, but was unsuccessful. Moer had been careful to interpose his valet between himself and the physician from the very first, and Parfitt was not aware that his half-yearly payments upon the account of "Carmine Roff" had come from the pockets of the nephew of the distinguished Lord Waldemar. He did not know that Moer had any especial interest in his patient, although the old scandal connecting Moer's name with that of Carmine Roff had become known to him. He did not know that Bing was Moer's valet, or that there was any acquaintance or connection whatever between Moer and Bing.

To make the situation of affairs perfectly plain to the reader, we must explain, at the risk of some repetition, that it was Bing who had sent for Dr. Parfitt to come up to town some ten years before, upon the occasion of Carmine Moer's sudden outbreak of insanity, and that Bing had then introduced himself to the mad-doctor as an agent of "Miss Roff's" relatives, empowered by them to provide a home for her. All the money received by the doctor upon "Miss Roff's" account had come through Bing; all communications concerning the unfortunate lady had been made to Bing, whose address had been always and simply at the general post-office.

Searching for Bing in London was a hopeless task. The doctor relinquished it about noon, and spent the remainder of the day in making fruitless inquiries of the police, at unions, alms-houses and hospitals, and wherever he thought it possible the demented woman might have found a temporary home.

By night he began to grow discouraged, but did not wish to return to Huntingdonshire without having gained something by his journey to town. He had had agents employed, ever since his patient's escape, in searching for her throughout the country for a distance of many miles from his Retreat, but he had not thought that she would direct her wandering, aimless steps to London, and had not even telegraphed the London police to look out for her. Now, however, in consequence of Bing's telegram, he resolved to remain in town until he should find her, believing that she had possibly found a hiding-place somewhere in the metropolis.

It was necessary to make active efforts to discover the missing woman, and accordingly on Friday evening he procured the insertion of an advertisement in several of the papers to be issued upon the following morning.

Upon the morning of Saturday, therefore—the morning upon which occurred, in the church of St. Jude's in Belgravia, the marriage of Darrel Moer to Hilda Floyd—there appeared in various papers Dr. Parfitt's advertisement. Owing to its position, and possibly also to their preoccupation with the expected marriage, neither Moer nor Bing noticed it.

Others, however, were more observing.

About one o'clock of that day, while the bridal party, consisting of Darrel Moer and his bride, Grimrod and Mrs. Watchley, were at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, Doctor Parfitt, by virtue of a gratuity to a waiter, took possession of a small table in the ladies' or family coffee-room of the hotel, and ordered a stout luncheon. He had not received any answer to his advertisements, and was a little perplexed and at a loss what to do next, and his desire for retirement had led him to avoid the busy coffee-room below stairs where business men were thronging. The ladies' room was deserted, and he selected a table in a farther corner near one of the windows commanding a view of the post-office.

Here he ate his chop and drank his ale with leisurely thoughtfulness. The waiter removed the dishes, and Dr. Parfitt took up one of the morning papers and perused his own advertisement with all the pride of an amateur author. It was extremely simple and to the point, reading as follows:

"Some three weeks since escaped from the Retreat of Dr. Parfitt, near Offord, Huntingdonshire, a female lunatic named Carmine Roff. Is about thirty years of age, tall, fair, with blue eyes and light hair. Had on when last seen a black alpaca gown and red shawl; no bonnet; shoes worn. Is sometimes violent, in which condition she is dangerous. A liberal reward will be paid for any information that will lead to her recovery. Call on or address Doctor Parfitt, Queen's Hotel, St. Martin's-Le-Grand."

The doctor rubbed his spectacles and read the advertisement again and yet again. The sight of his own name in print seemed to have a fascination for him.

He was a small man physically, with a very large head and a prominent, bulging forehead. He was honest, somewhat unworldly, and greatly devoted to his profession. His hobby was the treatment of the insane. He had no dungeons nor dark cells in his pleasant Retreat, no tortures of any kind for the mentally afflicted. There were padded rooms for the violent, a large and sunny garden inclosed by a high wall, where most of his patients strolled during warm days, or cultivated flowers, or read, or frolicked, under the supervision of humane keepers. The place was what it professed to be, a Home for the Insane, and the little doctor with his big heart was a father to these helpless ones.

Poor Carmine Moer had not fled from persecutions or ill-treatment, but only in obedience to the restlessness peculiar to her mental condition, or in pursuance of some new vagary.

"It's time I had some answer to this advertisement," thought the doctor. "Heaven knows into whose hands the poor creature may have fallen."

He sighed and folded the paper. Before he could arise, if such was his intention, a waiter appeared, bearing a card. He was closely followed by a tall and stately lady, dressed plainly in black and closely vailed, who was in turn followed at a little distance by a foreign looking maid.

Dr. Parfitt read aloud the name on the card, in sudden awe and wonder:

"The Countess of Rothsmere!"

The vailed lady bowed, coming nearer, and dismissing the waiter by a gesture.

She threw back her thick vail, revealing the pure and lovely face, the radiant blue eyes, of Lady Rothsmere.

The woman behind her was her Hungarian attendant.

"Have I the pleasure of addressing Doctor Parfitt?" asked her ladyship, in an exquisitely modulated voice.

"Yes, Madam—my lady!" responded the doctor, arising, full of perturbation at the rank and beauty and gracious address of his high-bred visitor. "Doctor Parfitt of Parfitt's Retreat, near Offord, Huntingdonshire, my lady. Is—is there anything I can do for you, my lady?"

He asked the question awkwardly enough. In truth, he hardly knew what to say to her ladyship, but felt it incumbent upon him to say something.

Lady Rothsmere glanced around the room. The waiter was gone, and there was no one in the room excepting the doctor, her Hungarian attendant and herself. Her ladyship drew a morning paper from her pocket, folded to display the doctor's advertisement, which was marked, and laid it before him.

"I am come to see you in relation to this notice, Doctor," she said, gracefully sinking into a chair, and motioning him to resume his seat upon the divan he had previously occupied.

Dr. Parfitt looked astonishment.

"Can your ladyship give me any information concerning Miss Roff's present whereabouts?" he asked.

"I regret that I cannot," replied the Hungarian Countess. "I have come to solicit information from you, Doctor Parfitt, rather than to impart it. I wish to hear from you many particulars concerning this unhappy lady for whom you are searching. Believe me, I have the right to know her history, and I beg you not to withhold from me any information you can give."

"You are Miss Roff's sister, perhaps, my lady?" suggested the doctor. "Ah, yes, I see. Miss Roff was of German descent, and of excellent family. She is your sister, of whom you have lost all trace for many years. You saw my advertisement this morning and hastened to come to me. Your fair complexion and blue eyes are like what Miss Roff's might possibly have been in health and happiness, but her complexion grew sallow and her eyes wild and haggard. I never saw her at her best, when sane, you know, my lady. She used often to speak in her ravings of her sister in Germany, a noble and fashionable lady, whom she had not seen for many years. Are you that sister? I see you are. I shall be happy, my lady, to answer any questions you may be pleased to ask me."

"Thanks," said the Countess, in an unsteady voice. "Was she—was Carmine—alive, to your knowledge, so lately as three weeks ago, Doctor?"

"It is between three and four weeks, my lady, since she escaped from the Retreat."

"Who placed her in your asylum?"

"A gentlemanly sort of man, an agent of the lady's relatives, named Watson Bing."

"Who paid you for her keeping?"

"The same man, my lady. All moneys came through the hands of Bing, and all receipts were made to Bing."

The Countess turned and addressed a few words in the Hungarian tongue to her attendant, who was seated at a respectful distance, but within earshot. Then her ladyship resumed her questioning of the little doctor.

"By what name was this unfortunate lady known to you, and entered upon your books, Doctor Parfitt?" she inquired.

"Under the name by which she had acquired fame as an actress, my lady—under the name of Carmine Roff."

"That was her name once," said the Hungarian Countess—"her own name, but it ceased to be her name upon her marriage."

"But she was not married, my lady," cried Doctor Parfitt. "It is true that she was always raving about 'Darrel,' calling him her husband, but she rarely if ever spoke the full name, which was that of a fashionable young gentleman allied to the nobility. I think, from your foreign air, my lady, that you have not been in England long, and—pardon me—you may not be aware that there was some scandal—that Mr. Darrel Moer was Miss Roff's lover—"

He stopped abruptly in confusion.

"I have not heard since I came to England the name of Carmine Roff," said the Hungarian Countess. "I have sought for her secretly, but without success. She was a wife, Doctor Parfitt, the wife of this Mr. Darrel Moer. I have not been idle since I came to England. I have employed skillful detectives. Read these."

She took out her silver portmonnaie, and displayed two documents. One was the copy of the registry of a marriage at the church of St. Helen's, Brighton, between Darrel Moer and Carmine Roff, spinster. The other paper was a copy of a similar registry at Somerset House, London.

"The proofs, you see, Doctor, are incontrovertible," said the Countess, with a stern inflection of voice. "This poor, injured, demented lady is Mrs. Darrel Moer."

The doctor perused the documents, handing them back to their owner.

"The fact is proven," he assented. "The poor lady is Mrs. Darrel Moer. She has been the victim of some terrible rascality. The man Bing told me she had not been married, and common report, my lady—"

A swift flush dyed her ladyship's cheeks.

"The man Bing is Darrel Moer's valet," she interposed. "Every penny you have received for your care of Mrs. Moer has come to you from her husband, who has paid you through Bing."

"But—but, my lady, why should Mr. Moer conceal the marriage?"

"For purposes of his own," replied the Countess, with a pallor as deep as the flush had been—"that he might marry again, perhaps. His alliance with Carmine Roff was likely to offend his uncle, then Squire Floyd, now Baron Waldemar, and he concealed the marriage. Is Mrs. Moer really insane?"

"A raving mad woman, my lady, full of notions and quirks and oddities, violent at times, and again gentle as a child, but never sane. She will never regain her mind in this world. She will not know you, my lady, when you see her, if we succeed in finding her. She has been in my care so many years that I shall dread to lose her. One misses a patient who has been a heavy and constant care for so long. I—I hope, my lady, that you will not take her away from my Retreat. I shall be glad to explain to you my system of treatment of my unfortunate boarders, and to show you through my house and prove to you that I do not keep one of those bugbear asylums that justly arouse condemnation, but that my house is in truth a home to these demented beings."

"I do not doubt it, Doctor Parfitt," said her ladyship, restoring the two documents to her portmonnaie. "I have no intention of removing Mrs. Moer from your care. I will come down to see her—I will help you to find her. Where can she be? Which way can she have fled on her escape?"

"We heard of her in the fen districts to the north and east of us, directly after she fled," said the doctor, "and I have men searching the fens for her even now. On Thursday—the day before yesterday—I received a telegram from Bing, asking if Miss Roff were safe at the Retreat, and saying he had reason to think her in London. I answered over the wires, and came to town the same day, but have seen nothing of Bing, although I expected to find him at this hotel waiting for me. I think Mrs. Moer must be in London, the coincidence between her disappearance and Bing's suspicion of having seen her here being so striking."

"He telegraphed you on Thursday?"

"Yes, my lady."

"Has Mr. Moer ever been to the Retreat to see his wife, in the character of a casual visitor?" asked her ladyship thoughtfully.

"I am sure not, my lady."

"At what time on Thursday did you receive the telegram?"

"About two o'clock, my lady."

"Ah!" said the Hungarian Countess. "I think I comprehend. Mr. Darrel Moer saw me on Thursday morning only for a moment, but I am convinced that he believed me to be poor Carmine. Hence Bing's telegram to you on the same day, and so soon after Moer had seen me. Doctor Parfitt, you are upon the wrong track. Carmine is not in London. Search for her everywhere. She must be found. I will spare no expense in the pursuit. Organize a search immediately without delay. Let the fens be examined inch by inch, if need be. Let messengers go from house to house. Scatter handbills over the country; post placards; warn the police everywhere to look for her and to intercept her. I repeat, she must be found."

The last words were spoken in a deep agitation, and Doctor Parfitt noticed the keen longing and anxiety in the lady's luminous blue eyes.

A waiter came into the coffee-room, muttering an apology for the unavoidable interruption, and handed Dr. Parfitt a telegram. The waiter hurried out into the corridor, and the doctor tore open the envelope and read the message.

With a shocked exclamation upon his lips, he looked pityingly at his noble visitor.

Something in the expression of his face struck her. She leaned forward, white and breathless, exclaiming:

"You have news of her? Read it to me. Quick! Read it!"

"Compose yourself, my lady. It is bad news—"

"Only tell me that she lives," breathed the Hungarian Countess, in a pleading voice, her face so white that the little doctor was frightened. "Whatever the news, tell it me. I cannot bear the suspense."

"The—the news is the very worst," stammered Doctor Parfitt, not knowing how to break it to her, and so telling the worst at once. "I'll read you the message, my lady. Here it is:

"To Doctor Parfitt, at Queen's Hotel, St. Martin's-Le-Grand: Miss Roff found last night, in the fen district. She had been dead some hours. Killed by a fall in a farm stable. Body has arrived at Retreat in charge of Porson. Send directions, or come.

"H. BROWNSON.

"That's all, my lady. Your poor sister is dead!"

"Dead! Dead!"

"Yes, my lady, and within thirty-six or forty-eight hours at most, poor creature!"

A strange look shot up into the grand eyes of the Hungarian Countess, a look which haunted and puzzled Dr. Parfitt long afterward. She arose and walked to the window. Her Hungarian attendant followed her, and the two talked together in their foreign tongue for some minutes.

"Poor lady!" thought the little doctor. "It comes hard upon her, even though her sister was insane. Natural affection—the affection begotten by early associations—survives years of separation, and remains unstifled by apparent estrangements, in natures like this of Lady Rothsmere."

He meditated and moralized while he waited. When Lady Rothsmere returned to him, he saw the traces of a great and terrible agitation on her countenance, but her voice was quite calm as she said:

"You will go home by the first train, I hope, Doctor."

"Yes, my lady," bowed the worthy doctor.

"I regret I cannot go with you," said her ladyship. "I may possibly follow you. It will not be necessary for me to identify her. I wish her interment to be conducted with all possible ceremony, as becomes one of her family and alliance. I wish all the arrangements to be in the best taste, and expenditures need not be limited. Let the silver plate of her burial casket be engraved with the words, 'Carmine Moer, wife of Darrel Moer.' The name that was denied her in life must be given her in death. Let the local papers contain an obituary notice of her, recalling her fame as 'La Belle Carmine,' the noted actress, declaring her marriage to Mr. Darrel Moer, nephew of the present Lord Waldemar, in 1859, and announcing her death and funeral. Justice must be done her at last, Doctor."

"Yes, my lady. Justice shall be done her. The obituary notice shall read as you say. I'll write it myself. Shall I say that she was the sister of the Countess of Rothsmere?"

"Say simply that she was allied to a noble family, sir, or tell her history plainly, as I have told you, adding nothing. For reasons of my own, I desire that my name shall not be mentioned in connection with her, and I especially desire that nothing may be said at present of this visit to you. I have a sacred duty to discharge, and all other feelings must give way until I shall have discharged it."

"I think I understand, my lady," murmured the little doctor, half inaudibly.

"Notices of Mrs. Darrel Moer's death will appear in all of Monday's papers of London, and the larger towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire," said the Hungarian Countess calmly. "These I shall cause to be published, and I shall write them. I desire you to send me full particulars concerning Mrs. Darrel Moer's interment, with newspapers containing the obituary notices which you purpose writing. I shall procure a suitable head-stone for her grave. There is only one thing more—the payment for the last rites."

Her ladyship again took out her pocket-book, and produced from it a crisp new Bank of England note for one hundred pounds, giving it to the doctor.

"If you need more money, draw upon me," she said. "My address is Park Lane, at Lady Thaxter's house. I will write it."

She wrote name, street and number very plainly upon her card, which still lay on the table, and the doctor took possession of the pasteboard. Her ladyship then signified her intention of departing, and the little doctor, in a flutter of awe and self-importance, escorted her down to Lady Thaxter's carriage, which, in all the bravery of mulberry cushions, fat horses with gold-plated trappings, and servants in livery, stood before the door of the hotel, the centre of an admiring crowd.

Dr. Parfitt waived the footman aside with quite an air, and assisted the beautiful Countess into the luxurious vehicle. The footman helped in the Hungarian attendant, the carriage door was closed, the footman mounted to his place, and horses and carriage moved away on their return to the West End.

"I understand what her 'sacred duty' is, to which everything else must give way," thought the doctor, looking after the vanishing equipage. "She is beset with secret terrors and anxieties. I could see that, under all her apparent calmness. I read her eyes at one or two momentous points in our conversation, and I read her soul through them like a book. She has come to England to find or to avenge her sister. I wonder some instinct does not warn Darrel Moer that there's danger brewing for him. Just so sure as he lives, this beautiful foreign Countess will wreak upon him some awful vengeance for her sister's wrongs!"

CHAPTER L.

A GLIMMER OF DAWN.

Lady Rothsmere returned from her interview with Doctor Parfitt in the City to Lady Thaxter's house in Park Lane. She was in a very silent mood, which her attendant carefully respected. Her ladyship scarcely spoke until she was again in her own luxurious suit of rooms, and had removed her bonnet and shawl, and even then her words were brief.

"You may lay out my dinner costume, Catharine," she said wearily, speaking in the Hungarian tongue. "We must keep up a brave exterior even when the heart is breaking. Whatever my own depth of anguish, I must not forget the duties of a guest to a hostess. But don't ask me what I shall wear. I have no heart for laces and trinkets. I go now to find Sir Hugh Tregaron."

She brushed the waves of her lovely gray hair, which contrasted so strangely with the youthful and exquisite beauty of her face, and descended to the drawing-room. The young Cornish Baronet was not there. She sought him, with a growing sense of disappointment, in the boudoir and conservatory, and finally went to the library.

Sir Hugh was here, but apparently upon the point of going out. His grave, handsome face brightened as her ladyship came in, and he greeted her with his usual chivalric courtesy.

"I thought you were gone out, Lady Rothsmere," he said. "My aunt went out in the brougham half an hour since upon a shopping expedition, and will not return, I fancy, for an hour yet."

The Hungarian Countess accepted the chair Sir Hugh placed for her.

"I have had quite an excursion," she remarked, in a voice that trembled in spite of her efforts to keep it calm. "I have been into the City, Sir Hugh. It is like another world than our quiet West End, is it not? Sir Hugh, be seated. I have a communication to make to you."

The young Baronet seated himself conveniently near to her.

Her ladyship hesitated a moment, and then resumed bravely:

"Sir Hugh, some weeks since, when Miss Glint came to this house, you asked me some questions relative to my acquaintance with Mr. Darrel Moer, or you desired me to tell you anything which I might know concerning his past. I could not answer your inquiries then. If I do so now, it must be with some reservations. I promised to befriend Miss Glint, and I have borne that promise in mind. After her disappearance at Bolton, and while you were searching there for her, I set detectives to watch Mr. Darrel Moer and his man Bing. These detectives were withdrawn over a week ago, owing to the pressure of other work upon them. But yesterday morning, at my urgent and express request, a special officer was detailed again to the duty of 'shadowing,' as the superintendent called it—of shadowing Mr. Moer."

"I have a private man detailed to the same duty," said Sir Hugh Tregaron quietly. "He's been off duty a day or two, owing to sickness, but will be on again Monday."

"You asked me once if I knew anything concerning a previous marriage of Darrel Moer, Sir Hugh," said her ladyship. "I do know that he was married at the church of St. Helen's, Brighton, in 1859, to Carmine Roff, the actress, known as 'La Belle Carmine.' Here are proofs of the marriage."

The Countess gave into the young Baronet's hands the two copies of the registry of the marriage thus alluded to.

Sir Hugh read them, his face flushing.

"I wonder I did not think of going to Somerset House," he exclaimed, "but I thought—I fancied he might have been married abroad, and it had not occurred to me to look in England for proofs."

"You fancied that I was his wife. I read your thought at the time, Sir Hugh. But I was never his wife, and he never made love to me," said the Hungarian Countess proudly. "That he has wronged me in some way, you may have guessed. That much is true; but the hour of his retribution is drawing near."

"Darrel Moer was married then to Carmine Roff?" said Sir Hugh, in a tone of disappointment. "His wife died some years ago. She has not been seen these ten years. As she has so long been dead, that marriage cannot affect Moer's claims upon Honor."

"His wife, Carmine Moer, died the night before last," explained the Countess impressively.

"The night before last!" cried Sir Hugh, in amazement. "So lately!"

"Yes, Sir Hugh, and she will be buried under her rightful name of Carmine Moer, probably on Monday."

An ineffable joy flooded Sir Hugh Tregaron's being.

"This is worth years of life, Lady Rothsmere," he said, with rapturous eyes. "Honor is free!"

"As free as the winds, Sir Hugh."

"Free from the hated bonds that tied her to Darrel Moer—free to accept my love—free to marry me. Oh, thank God!"

"But she is not free in another sense, Sir Hugh," said the Countess gravely. "I cannot think her dead. She is pining somewhere in imprisonment, oppressed, debarred God's sunshine and fresh air, and crying to us to release her. How are we to find her?"

"I have been active, Lady Rothsmere. I have set all the machinery of the law in motion; I have sought for her day and night; but her hiding-place eludes me."

"First of all," said the Countess, "I must have notices of Mrs. Darrel Moer's death in the London papers of Monday morning. That will be springing a mine upon Mr. Darrel Moer. The papers may even catch Honor's eyes by some providence. The name of Carmine Moer has been heaped with obloquy by Darrel Moer's own hands for ten years. His shrugs and sneers made people believe her not his wife. Justice shall be done her in her grave, Sir Hugh. I did not know until to-day that she had just died. Fate threw in my way—or was it Providence?—a brief advertisement in this morning's newspaper signed by a mad-house doctor, and calling for information of an escaped 'female lunatic' named Carmine Roff. You will find the advertisement in one of those papers yonder."

She arose, sought for the advertisement, found it, and gave it into Sir Hugh's hands. He read it attentively, and raised again to her his rapturous eyes.

"It brings back the vivid and full realization of the fact that Moer has no claims upon Honor," he said. "Her marriage to him was a mere farce."

"But she does not know it. She believes herself still bound to him. What if he were to attempt to make up with her, to promise better things, to win her pardon?"

"Impossible. She loathes and detests him. She will never be anything to him, Countess. Besides, he intends to marry Miss Floyd, I have no doubt. He can do so legally, since his wife is dead, Honor being nothing whatever to him."

"Yes, he doubtless hopes to retrieve his fortune by a marriage with Miss Floyd. But Lord Waldemar will not permit such a union when he knows Moer's villainy."

"Did you visit this Doctor Parfitt to-day, Countess?" asked Sir Hugh.

"I hastened to the Queen's Hotel, immediately on reading the advertisement. I found Doctor Parfitt, who is a most amiable man, and who gave me full particulars concerning Mrs. Darrel Moer. All payments for the keeping of the unfortunate lady have come through the man Bing, who is the only person Doctor Parfitt has known in connection with her. Darrel Moer has foully wronged her, but she will be avenged," said the Countess, in a stern, low voice. "But enough of this, Sir Hugh. We will talk of the living rather than the dead. I telegraphed yesterday to the company which owns the line of Mediterranean steamers, of which the *Argonaut* is the best vessel, to inquire when that steamer is expected. She is looked for on Tuesday next. And now, Sir Hugh, I beg you to write to-night to Captain Glint, care of his ship's owners, and inform him of his daughter's disappearance, and urge him to come up to London as early as possible."

"I will do so," said Sir Hugh, "although I doubt if the captain can do more than we have already done."

"Have we done all that we could?" asked Lady Rothsmere, a freight of anxiety in her low voice. "Sir Hugh, I begin to fear that we have been restrained by a false delicacy in keeping this matter from Lord Waldemar. We should have told him that we suspect his nephew of being concerned in Honor's disappearance."

"But, dear Countess, we cannot prove that Moer is concerned in it. There are other possibilities not less terrible. Lord Waldemar is a grand old man, but as stern and unyielding as a rock. His only son married against his knowledge the daughter of his enemy, and he would never forgive either of the pair. I would not lightly wring his heart by avowing to him the villainy of which we suspect Moer. His lordship is alone in the world, save for his grandchild, and he dislikes her for her resemblance to her mother's family. He is possibly not fond of Moer, but I dare say he really loves him. There is a vast fund of tenderness underlying his sternness and hardness. And finally, I promised Moer to keep silent concerning my suspicions of him until I had some stronger grounds for them."

"I have not promised Moer," said the Countess decidedly, "and I shall risk wounding Lord Waldemar's soul by telling him all our suspicions. He will be in this evening, and I shall improve the opportunity. And now, Sir Hugh, I desire to write my notices of the death of Mrs. Darrel Moer. Will you procure their insertion?"

Sir Hugh assented, and Lady Rothsmere seated herself at a desk and wrote an obituary notice of the character she had indicated in speaking to Dr. Parfitt. Sir Hugh Tregaron made several copies of it, and took charge of them.

"The one great thought that occupies me now is that Honor is not bound to Moer," said the young Baronet, giving back to her ladyship the two copies of the registries of Moer's first marriage. "Oh, if Honor only knew the truth! Wherever she is, the knowledge would make her happy, despite her persecutions."

"We shall find her soon," said the Countess. "Hope on, Sir Hugh. The end of our long sorrow draws near. It is almost dawn."

Sir Hugh went out upon his errand, full of gratitude to the lovely Countess, and full of sympathy for her.

"She seemed to put away her own griefs to comfort and inspirit me," he thought. "What is this Carmine Roff to her? Both are German. But her ladyship's private affairs are sacred to her. I must devote all my thoughts to Honor, my poor little missing Honor."

At dinner, Lady Rothsmere, Lady Thaxter, Mrs. Early and Sir Hugh Tregaron were present as usual, and the beautiful Hungarian Countess seemed cheerful, and was full of anecdote and wit. She was one of those rare, unselfish persons who seldom allow the pall of their own sorrows to overshadow others. She covered her aching heart with a brave smile, and never forgot the feelings of others in thinking of her own.

After dinner, the party returned to the drawing-room. A messenger soon after called with a letter for Lady Rothsmere. She read it and handed it to Sir Hugh Tregaron. It was to the effect that the detective who had been set to watch Darrel Moer, had been called home by the dangerous illness of his wife, but had placed on the watch in his stead a man in whom might be reposed the utmost confidence.

"I'm glad to hear that Moer is not to be left unwatched to-night," said Sir Hugh. "I am morally certain that he won't leave town to-night, to-day being Saturday, but the only safe way in dealing with such a villain is to make sure of his movements, leaving him no chance to slip off unseen. I am persuaded that Honor is still in Lancashire, and that Moer will be wary about visiting her, the more especially as he knows that the Bolton police are still on the alert. But then, again, he might select this very evening for such a visit."

"I agree with you perfectly, Sir Hugh," said Lady Rothsmere thoughtfully. "And I am glad that Moer is to-night under surveillance, for I feel somehow as if to-night were a crisis in all our lives and fortunes."

Ah, if they had but known! This night was that in which Darrel Moer and Grimrod, the latter unknown to the former, had gone forth with murder in their hearts to seek the lonely young prisoner at the Cypresses!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

A BIT OF ROMANCE.

Miss Sarah Butillon, at the age of nineteen, was an operative in one of the cotton-mills of Great Falls, N. H. During a certain June she was called home to nurse a sister who had fallen sick with typhoid fever. The sister died, and as her parents were old and poor, Sarah remained at home to look after the affairs of the household. Among her effects which she had brought with her from the factory was a parcel wrapped in a newspaper published in one of the cotton-growing parishes of Louisiana. In this paper she found, among prominent men mentioned as having taken part on a public occasion, one who bore her family name of Butillon. The name was not a common one, and in a jocose manner she said she had a mind to write to the man, and see if she could not scrape up a relationship. A companion told her she dared not do it. Partly from curiosity, and partly from a love of adventure, and, perhaps, influenced slightly by the banter of her friend, she put the project into effect. She wrote a sensible, modest letter, giving an account of her family, and its genealogy as she understood it, and suggested that, as the family name was not a common one, and that as the publication of his name had afforded her the only opportunity she had ever enjoyed of seeing the same in print, it was not impossible that some relationship existed between them.

In due time Miss Butillon received in reply a letter friendly and affectionate, the writer acknowledging that her father and himself must be cousins. He wrote that he had no family of his own, and but few friends, and he earnestly hoped and desired that the correspondence thus opened might be continued. Sarah acceded to his request, and a correspondence ensued agreeable and satisfactory to both parties. She wrote as a child might have written to an absent parent, while he answered as he might have answered to a daughter. This was kept up for almost three years, and then Philip Butillon ceased to write. Sarah's last letter had remained unanswered full three months, when she received, from an attorney of Natchitoches, intelligence of the death of her distant friend and namesake, together with the information that he had left to her by will the whole of his property, amounting to more than a hundred thousand dollars.

Shortly before receiving this intelligence Sarah had given her hand in marriage to a worthy printer of her native State, and together they visited the land of sugar and cotton, where the property was obtained without trouble.

We wish there were more Philip Butillons, and more Sarahs to hunt them up and secure their property,—that is, if said Sarahs would select worthy printers as the sharers of their prosperity.

S. C., JR.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1872.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former* as well as his present address.

Better Than Ever.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

FOR THE NEW YEAR, 1873.

THE GREAT FAMILY PAPER.

Instructive and entertaining as the *Ledger* has been in the past, we hope and intend to make it still more instructive and entertaining in the future. Our experience is greater than heretofore, and our ambition to make the *Ledger* the best paper of the kind published in the world, is undiminished.

It is the aim of the *Ledger* to cultivate a taste for reading in the rising generation, and at the same time, by the character of its contents, to contribute constantly to their moral and intellectual improvement and growth.

An epicure might as well undertake to write down what he would have for dinner every day for twelve months to come, as for us to attempt, at this time, a catalogue of all the good things that will be spread before the readers of the *Ledger* in 1873. Our old subscribers will bear us witness that all the promises we have ever made have always been more than fulfilled. We never let slip an opportunity to obtain any really good and desirable thing. Expense and trouble never stand in our way. And in this respect, as it has been in the past, so it will be in the future.

The *Ledger* is particularly devoted to the interests and welfare of the young. A vast number of questions about lovers' quarrels, propositions of marriage, plans for housekeeping, and the best means of brightening the future of youthful married couples, are answered in its columns.

One great and guiding principle with us is to inculcate the sentiments of self-respect and self-reliance, and thus to strengthen and render more manly the characters which are just assuming form, to endure through all their days.

The *Ledger* is always full of life. Nobody ever complains that even a single number is dull.

It has the largest number of great and distinguished writers.

It contains the purest, sweetest and most delightful stories, striking narratives, and instructive biographical and historical sketches.

It has the most popular and carefully prepared collection of scientific facts.

Many of the most distinguished clergymen of the country write for it.

All our favorite old writers will continue to write for the *Ledger;* and we are always on the keen look-out for any new developments of *real* rising genius.

OUR TERMS FOR 1873—NOW IS THE TIME TO SUBSCRIBE.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free.* Postmasters and others who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterwards add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage. When a draft or money-order can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. The postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country is only twenty cents a year, or five cents a quarter, payable at the office where the paper is delivered.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Will You? And If Not, Why Not?

"Will you lend me five thousand dollars—or two thousand dollars—or one thousand dollars? And if not, what is the reason why you will not?"

Such, in brief, is the substance of a great many letters which we receive. Some of them are couched in the most imploring terms: a home is to be sacrificed to rapacious creditors; a family is to be ruined; or something or other is to happen, if the request is not complied with. The writer is very apt to observe, "This is but little to you, but it will be everything to me;" and then, as if a glimmering of sense arose after this reasoning, to say, "I suppose you must have a great many such applications, and that it would be impossible to grant them all, but the circumstances of *my* case are so peculiar, you ought to make an exception of it." And all this comes from a perfect stranger; at least, from a person wholly unknown to us, and to whom we are known only by reputation.

We generally destroy such letters without answering them. They are not of interest to the public, and are not intended to be answered through the *Ledger;* and if we were to write private letters in reply, it would occupy much of our time, and interfere with imperative duties, while such a course would be of no use to our correspondents. To comply with their requests is of course out of the question; the fortune of the ROTHSCHILDS would not suffice for it; and there is no good reason why we should busy ourselves with picking out of the great mass a few instances in which to substitute "Yes" for our generally silent "No."

At the same time, we never feel indifferent to the suffering or inconvenience of any one who addresses us, and for this reason we make this general answer to all such applicants.

In the first place, it is absolutely impossible to do what we are asked to; and that fact ought to suffice as a reply, in all cases. In the second place, the avenues to independence and wealth are as open and as free to others as they are to us. *Let them go to work and make their fortunes.*

We say this in no spirit of unkindness, but on the contrary, in the hope of awakening, especially in the minds of our youthful readers, that feeling of self-reliance and of confidence in their own exertions which leads to manly and successful effort.

Concentrate your thoughts on your own business; make yourself master of it; be industrious; practice economy; study and observe the wise business maxims of the earlier Franklin, and you will at once begin to prosper.

If you love ease better than property—if you prefer luxury to independence—then you cannot rationally expect to escape the consequences, and is it not right that you should suffer them?

"I see a great many persons," said a rich man, who had made, by working hard and saving his pennies at first, every dollar of his fortune—"I see a great many persons commence by spending money just as if they thought the way to build a chimney was to begin at the top and build down. I always thought the safest way was to begin at the bottom and build up."

But the fact is, that many people have not the manliness to be willing to endure for a season the inconveniences of self-denial, even though subsequent pecuniary independence for life would be the reward. They prefer to be idle star-gazers—vain seekers after some royal road to wealth.

We say it in no spirit of vain boasting, but for the encouragement of all in straitened circumstances who choose to benefit their own condition: *the Editor of the* LEDGER *always made it a rule, however small his income, to save a part of it, and laid the foundation of his fortune by working over time at twelve and a half cents an hour.*

If none but those who have tried this way of accumulating capital, will write to us for the loan of money, we shall not receive many such letters for a year to come.

It is not necessary to cultivate an inordinate love of money in order to acquire sufficient of it. It is only requisite to adhere to the simple rule of spending less than you make. For our own part, we hate and despise a miserly spirit. We believe in generous friendships and in open-handed charity. But it is only the just who can afford to be generous, and only those who save can afford to be charitable.

We have to look out first for our own business. And while we never take a dollar of usurious interest, if we did not keep a large bank deposit constantly on hand, to draw upon at any time whenever something new offers of real value for the *Ledger,* we should not be doing our duty and fulfilling our promises to our readers.

We hold that, in the United States, as a general rule, it is a man's own fault if he is in want. If a man is willing to make the requisite sacrifice of ease and luxuries—principle he should never sacrifice—it lies within his own power to make himself independent.

And now, instead of asking us if we will not loan you some money, and if we will not, why not, just ask yourself why you need to borrow. Is it not because you have never been willing to pay the fair, honest price for capital: hard work and self-denial?

Foolish Mr. Bergh.

MR. HENRY BERGH is not satisfied with our opinion of him. If this feeling of dissatisfaction on his part shall have the effect to make him deserve a better one, it will be well.

But when MR. BERGH says that MR. BONNER is "unfriendly" to his Society, he states what is not true.

If MR. BERGH'S memory is not failing him, he must recollect that MR. BONNER gave him a hundred dollars for his Society; and, with a man of the proper qualifications at the head of it, MR. BONNER would cheerfully contribute much more.

Assumptions of arbitrary power and acts of petty tyranny are calculated to render even the most righteous cause unpopular in this free country; and no outspoken opponent has done the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals one-tenth part the injury which MR. BERGH'S own indiscretions have done it.

All that we desire is to have a judicious man who is not constantly offending the common-sense of the people at the head of this Society. Under wise management, the Society is capable of doing much good.

It is not necessary to abuse mankind, as MR. BERGH seems erroneously to think it is, in order to befriend dumb animals; and, in our opinion, the dog question might have been scientifically treated without the indecency which pervaded MR. BERGH'S letter on that subject.

Cruel Treatment of the Insane.

The discussion of the treatment of lunatics confined in Insane Asylums, which was started in the *Ledger* several months ago, seems to have extended over the whole country. Not only the newspapers, but also the legislatures of several States have taken the matter up, and various Asylums are undergoing a thorough overhauling by legislative committees. Many abuses are coming to light under these searching investigations, and not a few instances of shocking cruelty and scandalous wrong have been discovered. It appears that sane men have been confined as lunatics at the instigation of their own children who wanted to grasp their property. Wives have been incarcerated by estranged husbands, and husbands by scheming wives, simply to enable the perpetrators of these wrongs to carry on still other wrongs successfully. But the light of investigation which is now being shed in these dark prison houses of outrage and cruelty will, for a time at least, put a stop to the wrongs which have so long been shielded under the forms of law.

The Wearing of Fashionable Bonnets Prohibited in Church.

It has been said as a reproach against the fair sex, that some of them go to church as much to show off their finery as for purposes of devotion. The ecclesiastical authorities in Lima, Peru, will not permit the possibility of such a vanity among the ladies of that city, for we are told that recently a French lady was compelled to leave the cathedral because she had gone thither with a fashionable bonnet on her head. How would this rule work in New York city? We are inclined to think the churches would look rather forlorn.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT has translated from the Latin, expressly for the LEDGER, a beautiful poem, which will be found in another column.

—Newport boasts of six or eight thousand inhabitants; but this figure is doubled, during the bathing season, by the floating population.

LET THEM AMUSE THEMSELVES.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

In old-fashioned times boys and girls were left to their own wits for amusements, nor do I think that this was a very bad thing to be left with. I never go into a toy shop, especially one of these magazines in New York, where ten thousand toys are heaped together, without pitying the modern family.

Once the dear old aunt promised the little girl that if she would be good, she should have a doll made for her. Already she had had little thin and crinkly paper dolls, and picture dolls on slates, and handkerchief dolls folded and pinned, which could be opened out again, on pressing need, to the uses of a handkerchief.

But there shall be a brand-new doll, set apart and consecrated to the high ends of doll life, but it shall have eyes and nose and mouth, marked on with ink, and set forth in the sight of all men and girls. The joys of anticipation almost equal the rapture of possession.

At length the creative work is done, and the little girl comes into possession of a cotton doll stuffed with bran, and the face brought out in ink in a manner that would make an old Egyptian hieroglyphic dance with envy. A bit of well-worn calico, ten years ago flaming new, in a dress that excited envy, a shred of worn-out lace, a scrap or two of ribbon—these are the whole stock in the child's hand.

But what joy do they produce! Ah, no poet has yet sung one of the gentlest, richest, and most fruitful of earthly joys—the joy of a pet-loving little girl, with her first real doll. Sacred geographers have long searched for the position of Eden. We don't know about the old one, but the door of young paradise is placed not far from the corner where the little girl has laid her doll to rest. Her imagination supplies all that is lacking. This is not a corner of a garret, nor a nook in the closet. It is a splendid room. Those are not cobwebs, but tapestry hangings. Those bits of crockery—is there in Dresden or Sevres manufactures any ware so fine in their eyes as this delf is in the little girl's?

But now-a-days, children are buried down under the loads of toys which are upset upon them. Dolls? In one little girl's treasury house I can count twelve—small dolls, large dolls, china dolls, wax dolls, with eyes that move and eyes that don't, speaking dolls, creeping dolls, black dolls, and white and pink—with chairs, and doll sets of china, and beds, bureaus, stoves, houses, carriage, wagon and wheelbarrow, till the very inventory becomes burdensome.

Do not children enjoy these? Certainly. But no more than aforetime children enjoyed the home-made and scanty provision for amusement. It is the creative faculty in children that furnishes them their chief delight.

If the imagination is killed by the superabundant supply, it has no chance to create. All is done for it. This suppression of imagination by overloading is not confined to amusement. It is a deadly sin in art, literature, teaching, oratory, and all other departments which have for their object the moving of men's thoughts.

A chest of tools—not too many—is a far better present to a lad than a cart-load of wagons, machines, and finished things. No boy ever flew a kite that he had bought with half the pleasure that he experiences to see the work of his own hands rising heavenward.

Some of our happiest hours were spent in damming up a brook. We toiled at stones, we burdened ourselves with loads, we worked for days and days, at spare hours, in laying the ledge across the stream, in stuffing in clods, in adjusting boards, to carry a sheet out as a water-fall, and in a hundred wriggles of ingenuity that were an intense pleasure, at the same time that they were stirring up ingenuity and serving as a real education.

A good knife and a ball of twine is a good enough capital. Let the boy make his kite, make his base ball, make his sled, make his bat, his ladder. All true pleasure consists in the creative activity of the human faculties.

Stir up boys and girls to amuse themselves. Then amusement becomes a handmaid to education.

A Word about Word-Tinkers.

When the notorious etymologist—RULOFF the murderer—was hanged last year, we think not a few secret regrets were felt that more of them were not put to the same use.

Not but etymology is well enough in its place. Words, like people, have their ancestors and family connections, and to trace out their relationships is often a pleasing, and not always a profitless employment. But save us from the man who makes a mission of finding a father for every verbal waif that comes in his way, even if it have to be adopted out.

Consulting a treatise on the law of Insurance lately, we noticed a batch of pages devoted to the origin of the word "*policy;*" and after ransacking the nooks and crannies of half a dozen living languages, and violating the graves of several dead ones, where do you think the author found it? You would hardly guess. Why, of all the places in the world, in the Latin *pollex,* a thumb, because, forsooth, the thumb is, or was anciently, the instrument used in affixing seals to documents! Doubtless the same ingenious writer could, if he tried, give equally good reasons for deriving equity from *equus,* a horse, and honesty from *onos,* an ass.

We wanted to read no more in *that* book. Yet it affords but a fair sample of the way in which reckless verbal genealogists, in defiance of sense, sound and spelling, will invent a spurious kinship between words related neither by consanguinity nor affinity.

Still more insufferable are the verbal *false coiners,* ever on the watch to put off some base product of their own in lieu of the lawful currency of speech. We had more than one example of this during the recent horse malady. When nearly the whole adult equine population was afflicted with influenza, and all the colts had croup, and while sympathetic people everywhere were kindly advising remedies, some recommending to put the patients' feet in hot water, and others to swathe their throats in red flannel, far different was the occupation of the word-tinkers. While hundreds of the afflicted brutes—peace to their *manes*—were succumbing daily, and columns of the morning papers were filled with their obituaries, these critical, or *hippo-critical* gentry, spent their time in coining *names* for the disorder. And when at last *Epihippic* and *Epizoötic,* after much research, were hit upon, was any man or beast the better or the wiser? At least the *horses,* we opine, would answer *neigh.*

Epi*what* is it when donkies die of it, as did that poor little fellow we used to see going about the streets tugging a peanut cart? Poor little donkey!—he resembled so much a certain judicial luminary we knew once—not in New York, of course—that we never passed him without feeling an involuntary impulse to raise our hat.

Green grow the thistles over him!

—An exchange says, "Woman is a fact." This will tempt authors to write books on Natural History and Physiology for the purpose of embracing these facts.

THE ORDER OF NATURE.

FROM THE LATIN OF BOETHIUS.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Thou, who wouldst read, with an undarkened eye,
The laws by which the Thunderer bears sway,
Look at the stars that keep, in yonder sky,
Unbroken peace from Nature's earliest day.

The great sun, as he guides his fiery car,
Strikes not the cold moon in his rapid sweep;
The Bear, that sees star setting after star,
In the blue brine, descends not to the deep.

The star of eve still leads the hour of dews;
Duly the day-star ushers in the light;
With kindly alternations Love renews
The eternal courses bringing day and night.

Love drives away accursed War, and keeps
The realm and host of stars beyond his reach.
In one long calm the general Concord steeps
The elements, and tempers each to each.

The moist gives place benignly to the dry;
Heat ratifies a faithful league with cold;
The nimble flame springs upward to the sky;
Down sinks by its own weight the sluggish mould.

Still sweet with blossoms is the year's fresh prime;
Her harvests still the ripening Summer yields;
Fruit-laden Autumn follows in his time,
And rainy Winter waters still the fields.

The elemental harmony brings forth
And rears all life, and when life's term is o'er
It sweeps the breathing myriads from the earth,
And whelms and hides them to be seen no more.

While the great Founder, he who gave these laws,
Holds the firm reins and sits amid the skies,
Monarch and Master, Origin and Cause,
And Arbiter supremely just and wise.

He guides the force he gave; his hand restrains
And curbs it to the circle it must trace;
Else the fair fabric which his hand sustains
Would fall to fragments in the void of space.

Love binds the parts together; gladly still
They court his kind command and wise decree.
Unless Love held them subject to the Will
That gave them being, they would cease to be.

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

BY JAMES PARTON.

In the Congressional burying-ground at Washington, the eye of the stranger is caught by the monument erected by order of Congress to Elbridge Gerry, that Vice-president of the United States who, as the monument records, "died suddenly" in Washington, November twenty-third, 1814, "on his way to the Capitol." On the morning of his death, being in his usual health, his carriage called for him a little earlier than usual, for he wished to stop at the office of the Register of the Treasury, where he had some business. He performed his errand, returned to his carriage, and was driving toward the Capitol, when he fell forward insensible, and died in twenty minutes, without a struggle and without pain. His remains were honored with a public funeral, and, a few years later, an appropriation was made for building the monument which covers them.

After forty years of public service, Elbridge Gerry, though he began his public life possessed of a considerable fortune, won by his own industry and skill in commerce, died so poor that his family, consisting of a widow and nine children, were in want almost as soon as the breath had left his body. A political opponent and rival honored himself by introducing a bill into Congress for paying to his widow the remainder of the salary for the full term of four years. The bill passed the House, but was lost in the Senate, and, as I think, very properly lost, for it would have become a precedent that might have led in time to great abuse. President Madison, however, appointed the eldest son of Mr. Gerry to a place in the Revenue Department, which enabled him to support the family, and two other sons were soon after appointed to the navy, of which they became valuable officers.

But these appointments, natural as they were, and creditable to the feelings of Mr. Madison, were wholly inconsistent with our governmental system, which expressly excludes the hereditary principle, and requires that every appointment should be made in such a way as best to promote the efficiency of the service. Now, no service can be efficient in which there is not a proper system of promotion; and this cannot be when appointments are made from the outside world, for reasons unconnected with the service. The error lay in assigning to high offices, such as that of Vice-president, such pitiful salaries; and this error has not yet been corrected. There is not a person in high office, under the general government, or under any of our State governments, or under the governments of any of our large cities, who is not *extravagantly* underpaid. I say extravagantly, because experience has shown that appointing tenth-rate men to office, and giving them tenth-rate pay, has cost one city of this Union ten millions per annum of stolen money.

Elbridge Gerry was a victim of this false policy at other periods of his life. Before the Revolutionary War he was, as I have said, a prosperous merchant of Marblehead, Massachusetts. Marblehead is situated on a point that extends two or three miles out into Massachusetts Bay, and was inhabited at that time only by fishermen and merchants. Being a merchant and a man of substance, he naturally took the lead in such a community during the agitation which preceded the Revolutionary War. He was a just, public-spirited, thoughtful and resolute man, a great friend and constant correspondent of Samuel Adams, who was the soul and centre of the opposition to the King in Massachusetts for twenty years.

"The whole business of life," wrote Gerry to Adams, when the news of the Boston Port Bill reached Marblehead, "seems involved in one great question: *What is best to be done for our country?*"

That sentence perfectly describes both the feelings and the conduct of Elbridge Gerry at that period. Politics became, indeed, the whole business of his life; and, after serving his State in various honorable capacities, he found himself a member of the Continental Congress; in which character he signed the Declaration of Independence. He served during the gloomiest period of the war on that most laborious and responsible Committee which had charge of the finances of the country. As the war went on, the forty gentlemen who composed the Congress of the United States were reduced to sad straits. At one period, when a dollar in gold was worth four thousand in paper, if indeed it could be said to have any value, Mr. Gerry described his own situation thus:

> "I now owe one hundred and forty-seven dollars—gold—for board, and some little borrowed of my landlady, besides twenty-six borrowed for every-day expenses, and perhaps sixteen more to tailors and shoemakers. How, under Heaven, am I to get this with provincial paper, which does not pass here for anything at all, and is next to nothing where it was issued? You speak of my soon being at home! I own no horse, or I might ride away from these great debts, and ask charity on the road for a delegate from Massachusetts, to enable him to reach home."

The supreme power of the country, nevertheless, and the control of two armies, were in the hands of these forty men who were troubled to pay their board. Gerry took it in good part, and made a joke of it. He guarded the public treasury with vigilance and sternness. It was he, in fact, who, as Chairman of the Treasury Board, rejected the corrupt claims of General Arnold, which kindled the anger of the traitor, and caused him to appeal to Congress from Gerry's decision, with severe remarks upon the conduct of the Chairman of the Financial Committee. Mr. Gerry replied to Arnold's abuse with a remark which some public servants of the present day might use with propriety.

"If," said he, "the faithful discharge of official duty, unpleasant enough in itself, is to bring with it the liability of personal attack from men who have neither honesty in their public dealings nor courtesy in private life, it might be well to abolish all guards upon the Treasury, and admit rapacity and crime to help themselves at pleasure."

Elbridge Gerry, though a strictly virtuous and honorable man, was one of those who are sometimes described as "difficult to get along with." He had a spiritual malady, not uncommon in New England at that period, which still troubles some Yankees, otherwise excellent: He was morbidly suspicious. He was prone to attribute evil motives. His companions felt that he was doubtful of their sincerity; and he did indeed habitually expect public men to abuse their trust. John Adams was full of this untrusting, distrusting spirit; and I have often wondered how it could be, that men so honest and sincere as John Adams and Elbridge Gerry, could instinctively attribute to other men baseness of which they were themselves incapable. Along with this suspiciousness, there was in Elbridge Gerry a tenacity of mind which caused him to adhere to a groundless suspicion or a trifling right as firmly as to interests the most sacred and the most important. In the midst of the Revolutionary period, Congress having refused him the ayes and noes on a motion, he protested against the refusal as a wrong done to his State, and after waiting a month for Congress to redress his grievance, he abandoned his seat, and referred the subject to the Legislature of Massachusetts. Nor, when re-elected to Congress, would he accept the seat until the affair had been adjusted.

He was one of the original founders of our Democratic party—one of those who, even before the war ended, had a dread of increasing the power of the central government, and a horror of the parade and pageantry which called to mind the vice-regal system.

At the close of the war, when the treaty of peace was presented to Congress for its consideration, there were only three members in the body who had signed the Declaration of Independence: Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Gerry, and Mr. Ellery of Rhode Island; all of whom were named upon the Committee to whom the treaty was referred. He witnessed the memorable scene of Washington's resigning his commission at Annapolis. He served also in the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

But the great event of his life, and that which alone will cause him to be remembered in history, was the part which he took in preserving peace, in 1798, between the United States and France. He was a member of the grand embassy of three distinguished men—John Marshall, (afterward Chief-justice,) Charles C. Pinckney of South Carolina, and Elbridge Gerry—who were sent out by President Adams as a last effort to preserve the peace. Never was an embassy more outrageously treated than these three gentlemen were by the French Directory and their corrupt satellites; and no one can blame Mr. Marshall and Mr. Pinckney for returning home in disgust. Elbridge Gerry, however, thought it best to remain in France a while longer. He felt that the ill-treatment which the embassy had received was the work of a few corrupt men, not the act of the French people, not authorized or sanctioned by them, and, above all, not morally adequate to justify a war between the two countries.

When he was recalled, a few months after, he went straight to Quincy in Massachusetts, where his old friend, President Adams, was spending his vacation. In long and repeated conversations, he gave the President such an insight into the state of things in France, and made it so clear to his mind that war could be honorably avoided, that the President determined to reopen diplomatic intercourse; which averted war. Mr. Adams, in the most emphatic manner, attributed this happy result to the information brought from France by Elbridge Gerry.

Not the less, however, did this action offend the Federal party. Politics at that day were even more brutal than they are now; if not more personal, yet more ferocious. While Mr. Gerry was performing this inestimable service to his country, his innocent wife and children were exposed to gross and cruel insult, at their residence in Cambridge. Anonymous letters were sent to Mrs. Gerry, attributing his stay in France to an amour. Several times a guillotine was erected in the night, in a field before her house, smeared with blood, and having upon it the figure of a beheaded man. The sleep of the family was often disturbed by a burst of yells under their windows in the middle of the night, and a great bonfire would be suddenly kindled in front of the house, most terrifying to children awakened from sleep.

The people avenged them, however, in due time. In 1810, after a series of the most desperate political contests ever known in any country, Elbridge Gerry was elected Governor of Massachusetts; and in 1812, he was chosen Vice-president of the United States.

"KEPT IN."

Among childish troubles, is there anything greater than that of being kept in after school? I don't know of any. There is something ludicrous to me now in the woeful dread I then had of it, but I remember it very well, nevertheless. Ah, what a miserable feeling fell upon me, when the doors closed after my last retreating comrades, and the big school-room became a place of echoes, with one small delinquent sitting in its midst, opposite the severe countenance of the teacher!

Our arms were folded, our feet dangled a little above the floor, we choked down our sobs, and all the lamentations of Job would have seemed to us only appropriate for the occasion. The janitress coming in with broom and brush and clattering dust-pan, and looking at us curiously, was as though the whole world knew our shame and scorned us for it. Little Sam. Brown peeping in at the window behind Miss Chick to make a face, added to our misery. It was a sort of insult to the fallen.

The long black hands of the clock marked the time slowly and solemnly. There were stories current in the school of a kept-in child who had been shut up in the heater and forgotten until next day, when somebody smelt something roasting. Billy Scamp said it was true. To be sure, Billy told fibs.

Why, O why did we speak? It was an awful temptation; but why did we? There at home the lunch waited us—the delicious lunch! There was apple pie, we knew. There sat our doll with its pink and white face, and its little stiff kid hands. There was the place where we could talk, and run, and be ourselves. There was all the love the world held for us, and a fate supreme and dreadful in the person of Miss Chick held us here.

Could it be only five minutes? Could it be only a quarter of an hour? Wasn't it nearly midnight? Oh, how long the time was! At last came the—

"You may come here. Will you ever do so again? Are you sorry? You may go."

And we were free. The school-house with its stifling smells, the stern face of Miss Chick, the horrible old clock, were all left behind; but a new trial awaited us. The butcher, looking out of his shop door, knew we had been kept in. The little candy-store woman knew it also. Peace only came within the walls of home, where people knew that we must speak now and then, or burst. Ah, it makes us laugh now, but it was real trouble then.

MARY KYLE DALLAS.

A Little Bit too Much.

We would suggest to the editor of the Waynesburg (Pa.) *Messenger* that when he copies two long articles from the *Ledger,* without credit, in one number of his paper, as he does in his issue of November 6th, he tests our forbearance just a little bit too much.

"BY THE RIVER."

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Sadly, silently, we're watching,
By a river dark and wide,
As its rolling, surging waters
Ever onward swiftly glide.
Rays of light and flitting shadows
Come and go upon its shore,
As we listen for the voices
That may greet us never more.
In the land beyond this river
Our beloved are ever blest;
"Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest."

On the rocky banks we stumble,
As we look with heavy eyes
Over all the waste of waters,
Waiting for the mist to rise.
Will it softly, quickly scatter?
Will its glittering glow unfold
Mansions, homes of heavenly beauty,
Paths whose glory is untold?
Well we know, dark, silent river,
That the pure in heart are blest,
"Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest."

Tired hands are gently folded
O'er many a pulseless breast
Tired brains are freed for ever
From the cares which once oppressed;
But *we*, O death's dark river,
We are standing on thy brink,
And from thy chilling waters
Still we timidly do shrink.
Shall we find our fondly cherished
Beyond thy dark heaving breast,
"Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest?"

THE BROADACRES TRAGEDY; OR, The Irrevocable Promise.

By CARLOTTA KINGSLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF NO. 27," "FILIPPO, THE BANDIT," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FLIGHT.

"He could no longer death's expectance bear,
For death is less than death's continual fear."

The moon had set, and a dark cloud wrapped the face of nature in sombre gloom, when the clock in the church spire at Eristoun chimed the hour of two.

The sound reached the mansion of Broadacres, and more than one ear was strained attentively to catch the faithful strokes, and thus to note the slow flight of time.

Miss Eristoun turned restlessly upon her pillow, and longed for morning, that daylight might dispel the horrid fancies which frightened sleep from her eyelids; and in a chamber far distant from her own there was one who, with feverish anxiety and frantic haste, was panting to accomplish the events of the next few hours.

It was from no pillow of rest that this last raised his head to count the strokes of the clock. He raised it from over a pile of dusky papers and letters which were spread before him upon the open ebony cabinet in Marmaduke Eristoun's death chamber.

That his occupation was surreptitious was fully evidenced by the unseasonable hour, the dim room, his stealthy movements and his Guy Fawkes manner.

He was guided and lighted by the same silver lamp whose rays, a few hours before, had been so eagerly followed by the detective upon the lawn; but now the light only fell within certain limits, for its bearer had so adroitly shaded it, that not one of its rays reached the window to tell the watcher without that his expected prey was astir.

The dark face of Walter Manning was set with an irrevocable resolve as, after counting the strokes of the clock, he again resumed his occupation.

With impatience he tossed aside packet after packet of carefully labelled letters and documents. Title deeds, memoranda of securities, bonds and mortgages, were lightly passed over, and he seemed intent upon what was undoubtedly an absorbing search.

He was not so greatly hurried, however, but that he took every precaution to replace each packet he examined in its proper covert; but as time passed, and the object of his search still eluded him, his impatience became uncontrollable.

"I won't be baffled at every turn!" he muttered. "I surely heard him say that in this cabinet there would be found ample proofs of what he had not the time to explain. Agatha inherits Broadacres upon condition that she marries Walter Manning; so it is essential that Walter Manning should discover the grounds of that condition. I fancy, too, that there are other papers here which it is for my interest to possess, and I'll not give over the search until I have obtained them. Ha! what's this?" he said, as by accident, in his rapid, impatient search, his hand struck a secret spring, and a hitherto unsuspected compartment in the desk was discovered.

"My difficulty is now doubtless solved," he triumphantly added, and thrusting his hand forward, he drew forth a bundle of sealed papers which a single glance sufficed to show him were those he sought, and without a scruple or an instant's delay he transferred them to his pocket.

In his haste he had dragged out with the papers many other articles well worthy of being guarded in a secret receptacle, for his hand came forth wreathed and entwined with strings of pearls of inestimable value, and with various other gems whose brilliancy was most dazzling even in the feeble light which fell from the dim lamp.

For an instant he held in his hand riches which would have sufficed for a prince's ransom, but with a contemptuous toss of his hand he flung them all back into their dark hiding-place, and having secured what he sought, he again touched the spring, and the receptacle was closed as securely as before.

An instant more, and the cabinet was closed in such a manner that the most attentive eye could not detect the previous visit of an intruder, and then, the lamp having been extinguished, the midnight visitant prepared to leave the apartment in the dark.

He gained the corridor, and was passing rapidly and stealthily along the passage, when, turning a sharp angle near the large oriel window, he suddenly encountered a human figure standing near the foot of the stair-way.

It was his first impulse to seize the stranger by the throat, and thus prevent any outcry or inquiry; but an instant after, assuming the tone and authority of a proprietor, whose privilege of passing from one part of the mansion to another, even at this unseasonable hour, was undeniable, he haughtily demanded of the figure what he was, and if he knew the hour.

"I was only returning from arranging some seines in the fish-pond, sir," was the calm reply which the other received.

"Ha! Adkins, is that you?" said his master, who had mistaken his English servant for an enemy and a spy. "The suddenness of your appearance startled me. But why are you in this part of the house, even granted that the care of the seines should take you from your bed so early?"

"I was going to your chamber, sir, to tell you that I hardly think things are all as they should be without."

"Speak lower, Adkins," interrupted his master impatiently.

Thus commanded, the man continued, in a whisper:

"One of the officers from town remained behind the others, and since dark I have seen him upon the terrace, watching the house."

"Well, what of that? Is there anything strange in his taking a fancy to study architecture, if he has nothing better to do?" demanded Manning brusquely.

"Certainly not, sir; only—"

"Only what, Adkins?"

"Nothing, sir, only I thought that perhaps you'd like to know of it."

"It didn't need you to tell me," said his master haughtily. "I saw the fellow myself, and had half a mind to send to inquire his business, but thought better of it afterward, and concluded to let him gratify his foolish whim, and patrol the terrace until he became tired. Is he there still?"

"Yes; but he is sitting now near the south wing, and seems pretty well fagged out, to judge by his position."

"Is he asleep, do you think?"

"No, sir; he is one of the kind who are never sleepy when they've business on hand."

"Adkins!"

"Sir."

"I shall leave Broadacres soon, possibly before morning."

"Yes, sir."

"You don't seem at all surprised at the sudden announcement."

"Why should I, sir? I've been your servant for upward of ten years, and during that time I have known you to take many journeys as sudden as this one."

An angry rejoinder rose to the lips of Manning, but perceiving from the tone of his servant that no sarcasm was intended, he calmed himself, and said:

"I shall leave you here, and shall expect you to keep me well posted concerning everything that transpires. You can tell whoever questions you about my absence that a telegram summoned me away, that you didn't rightly understand to what place; that Miss Eristoun knows more of my movements than you do yourself, and that I expect to return in a few days."

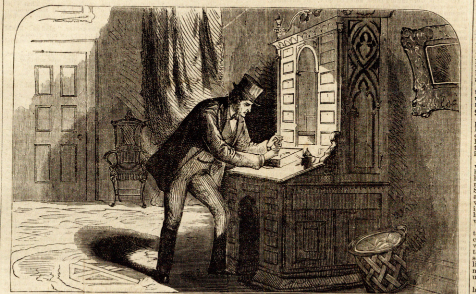
"Very well, sir; but in case anything should happen, where could you be found?"

"You shall hear from me soon. I shall not be far distant. Be as faithful as you have been in the past, and you shall be well rewarded."

"Shall I prepare your luggage, sir?"

"No, I have no time to wait for it. Go back to bed; and here, take charge of these keys."

His master tossed him a bunch of keys, and without another word continued his way along the corridor at a stealthy pace, and descended the stairs leading to the ground floor of the mansion.



WALTER MANNING'S MIDNIGHT OCCUPATION.

The servant drew nearer the oriel window and looked down upon the terrace below. He saw his master issue from the house and steal cautiously along in the shadow of the building, gain the shrubbery which flanked the mansion, and from there pass into the chestnut avenue on his way to the entrance to Broadacres.

By an adroit turn of his head and body, Adkins was enabled also to command a view of the spot where the detective was resting from his tiresome patrol.

The night was so dark that he could scarcely distinguish an immovable object from the surrounding shrubbery, and he was upon the point of believing that the spy had abandoned his post, when he saw a dark object move along the terrace, and a nearer approach told him that Williams had resumed his promenade with fresh determination.

"Your game has escaped, my fine fellow," said Adkins below his breath. "It would doubtless have been a fine thing for you if you could have trapped the gentleman who just stepped out for a midnight walk; but there are some things you don't understand quite as well as I do, and when you think you have Walter Manning, Esq., tight in your grasp, then is just the time when you haven't. I know what your suspicions are. You fancy he dealt the cards in that game down there by the park gates last night, and that he murdered the stranger; but you're mistaken there, my friend. Nevertheless my master is wise in leaving Broadacres just now. He has his thoughts, and I have mine."

Relieving himself of these reflections, Adkins, Mr. Manning's confidential valet, turned away from the window.

His master's last command was still fresh in his memory, but other pursuits and plans clashed with present obedience; so, instead of returning to his own chamber in the part of the house appointed to the servants' use, he boldly passed on through the corridor, and up the staircase at the further end.

As he passed Miss Eristoun's door he paused a moment.

"Poor young lady!" he murmured, "I wonder how much you'd give to know all I know. I'm tempted sometimes to tell you, but I belong to a race that never yet betrayed their masters, and I won't be driven to it quite yet. I've served Mr. Manning through thick and through thin too long to leave him in a pet now, because of late he has fallen into the habit of insulting me in a way no respectable English servant can tamely endure. I'll do the best I can for him still though, and perhaps when he's married things will be different. When that time comes he may even have the grace to thank me for what I dare not now confess to him;" and with these words he continued his walk up the staircase, and was lost in the gloom.

William Adkins, the valet of the future lord of Broadacres, was a type of a former race of English servants—one whose fidelity to his master's interests was a vital part of his religion, and yet he was a man whose self-respect could not be assailed without latent or expressed resentment.

The service of Walter Manning was in many respects desirable, for, with the exception of occasional outbursts of passion, he was an indulgent and munificent master. But of late the perplexities of his mind had wrought such a change in his manner toward his valet, that upon more than one occasion Adkins had contemplated leaving his service.

Though Walter Manning was himself in appearance near the prime of life, his servant looked upon him as one over whom he must exercise a watchful care, and this circumstance, added to one other, had led to the rencontre just described.

The outbreaks of passion to which reference has already been made as occasional occurrences with Walter Manning, had recently become so frequent and violent that the memory of insults then received rankled deep in the breast of the supposed docile valet for many days afterward; and though the man was not himself aware of it, there lurked in his disposition a vengeful element which, under certain circumstances, would seek expression.

An event had lately occurred which, unknown to the master, had given the servant a powerful hold upon his employer, yet the time had not yet arrived when Adkins was tempted to make a bold use of that power. The idea of doing so had probably not yet occurred to him; he still regarded his master with loyalty, and his were single to his interests; but had Walter Manning known of all his servant's plans and actions, he might reasonably have been alarmed, and his daily treatment of the man would assuredly have been more kind and respectful.

The next morning, when Miss Eristoun descended to the breakfast room, she was met by Adkins, who, in the solemnly respectful manner peculiar to his order, presented her with a note.

She instantly broke the seal. It was from her cousin, and it informed her, in a few brief lines, that he was summoned from Broadacres for a few days upon urgent business which forbade him lingering to explain, but that upon his return he should excuse his sudden absence. He assured her that nothing but a matter of the most vital importance, intimately connected with her late father's honor, obliged him to leave Broadacres at that moment, and he trusted that upon his return she would be fully prepared to redeem the pledge upon which his fondest hopes hung.

This diplomatic note fully satisfied the mind of Agatha, for when one feels indifferently toward a person, when we neither like nor dislike him, his presence or his absence is a matter of little moment to us, and trifling excuses satisfy us. It must be confessed, however, that in the case of Agatha Eristoun, a feeling of relief was experienced, and this feeling made her accept with the more confidence the specious plea which her cousin had left behind, to account for his absence.

"Did you see your master before he left?" she asked of the irreproachable Adkins.

"Yes, my lady, only a few moments before he left the house."

"And he gave you this note to deliver to me?"

"Not then, ma'am. I found it on his dressing table when I went into his room this morning."

"Ah, very well;" and the lady thrust the missive into her pocket, and continued her way to the breakfast room.

But Adkins passed along the front corridor, through the hall door, and out upon the terrace, where he was presently met by Mr. Williams the detective, who, in a most natural manner, was sauntering toward the mansion, evidently for the purpose of making a call upon some unimportant business.

Adkins touched his hat to him as he passed, and would have continued his way onward, but the officer called after him, and asked:

"Is your master astir yet?"

"Didn't you meet him, sir?" asked the man.

"Meet him! When?" demanded the other, with a startled air.

"On the road to Eristoun. He left the house some little time ago. Business called him to town."

The detective muttered an oath between his set teeth, and without stopping an instant for further questions, wheeled suddenly about and left the estate.

"You'll have to ride fast and far to overtake your man," muttered Adkins. "He's given the slip to shrewder men than you more than once before, and he'll find no difficulty in dealing with you."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HAUNTED CHAMBER.

'Tis a history
Handed from ages down.
SOUTHEY'S "THALABA."

Although Broadacres could not boast of the ancient associations which clustered around its prototype in the old country, it was not lacking in one essential characteristic of traditionary interest.

It had its haunted chamber, which, from time immemorial, had been the terror of servants, the cynosure of strangers, and the aversion of proprietors.

Years before, when the first Eristoun lord came to America with his colony of servants and dependents, there had accompanied him, as a member of his family, a distant relative, one who in her youth had been a bright ornament of the English court, but whose intellect had become clouded by overwhelming misfortunes, until at last her existence had been threatened by her own insane hand.

Her kinsman, Ralph Eristoun, believing that a total change of scene would perhaps effect a cure, and be the means of restoring her to her friends the same peerless creature she had been before sorrow and disappointment assailed her, easily prevailed upon her to accompany himself and his family to the new world.

But the expected change came in a way the good Ralph had not anticipated. From the moment of her landing she became more docile indeed, less violent in her outbursts of frenzy, but her bodily strength grew weaker in proportion, and she fell into a silent, moody state, from which it was impossible to arouse her.

When the mansion at Broadacres was completed, the Lady Alicia was given apartments of her own choosing. She selected a suit of chambers far removed from the rest of the household, in the loftiest part of the building, and here it was that she passed the remainder of her sad life, brooding over the past, but having no power to enjoy or seek consolation in the present.

Before her death, fortune, which had dealt so hardly with her in her youth and prime, relented, but too late. It was nothing to her that riches and honors poured in upon her; that a cruel, selfish husband repented upon his death-bed of his injustice, and made what reparation he was able from the shattered remains of a once noble fortune. But what would have afforded the Lady Alicia the greatest comfort, could she have understood it, was the last bequest the dying man's will contained. With every assurance of contrition, he confided their only child, a son, to her guardianship and guidance; but she did not live to receive the trust, and the child was left to the care of its father's relatives in England.

Upon the Lady Alicia's death her apartments were closed, and the Eristoun family soon after leaving for England, many years elapsed before they were again opened.

In the mean time various stories connected with them and their deceased mistress became current. Her peculiar mode of life, her occasional extravagant fancies, and the weird, preternatural cast which her mind acquired before her death, and which was manifested by a restless roaming about the mansion and grounds, by low self-communings, and by an avoidance of society, were circumstances carefully noted by the servants during her lifetime, and treasured in their remembrance after her death.

Not many years elapsed, therefore, before ghostly tales became rife concerning the places which had been her favorite haunt when living, and the chamber wherein she slept for so many years, and where she finally died, was said to be especially the scene of supernatural manifestations.

It needed but this report to cause that part of the mansion, which before had been little used, to be at last altogether abandoned, and it thus happened that as years went by the "haunted chamber" became a locality not visited from year's end to year's end by any member of the family, and the dust and associations of generations were allowed to remain unmolested by either disturbance or disbelief.

It was said that during the summer months the manifestations in the haunted chamber, and along the corridor which led to it, were the most noticeable, and at the period of which we are now writing many marvelous tales of fresh horror and blood-chilling vividness had been related.

Possibly the tragic event which had taken place at the entrance to Broadacres had added a new charm to the marvelous in the minds of the servant-maids and grooms, for the first stoutly maintained that since that event they had distinctly heard strange and horrible noises proceeding from the chamber, which could only be accounted for by supernatural means; and one of the grooms boldly asserted that at night, as he lay in the stable loft, he could see lights flash and flicker from Lady Alicia's chamber windows, in too strange a fashion to be caused by anything earthly.

These tales, repeated and garnished with fresh additions at each repetition, had been detailed with the utmost credence in the servants' hall, and in the domestic purlieus of Broadacres, yet not in so clandestine a manner but that they at last reached the ears of Miss Eristoun herself.

Her sound sense was not to be shaken by these marvelous tales, and upon more than one occasion, in derision of them, she had been upon the point of visiting the haunted chamber, for the purpose of proving to her people the absurdity of their fears; but every attempt which she made to do so had been met with such alarmed opposition and tearful remonstrances on their part, that she abandoned the project.

A month had now elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter had taken place—a month fraught with few events of interest, and yet replete with the rest and peace which was so like balm to the troubled spirit of Agatha Eristoun.

The "few days" which Walter Manning had named as the limit of his absence passed, and others followed, and yet he did not return. Surprised and apprehensive at first, Agatha quieted her fears at length by the trivial excuses which her own wishes and the kindness of her friends suggested; but at the close of a fortnight a letter reached her from her cousin, stating that the affair which tore him from her side so suddenly obliged him to sail for England, that it might there be consummated.

"This alternative is a greater trial than my stoicism was at first able to endure," he wrote, "for thus the cup of bliss is again snatched from my lips. With all the impatience of the most devoted lover I was counting the moments which must elapse ere I again sought your side, when the inexorable necessity surprised me of putting the wide Atlantic between us.

"It is no exaggeration to tell you that for a few moments I was beside myself with disappointment and rage. I know not what direful consequences might have ensued had I been allowed many moments for reflection, but the urgency of my departure imposed a restraint upon me which I could not disobey.

"Agatha, my betrothed, nay, my bride!—for your solemn and repeated promises I regard as sacred, as binding as marriage vows—the time which I pass away from you is to me a very agony of suspense. Your image, your memory is my constant companion, and thus my separation from you is in some degree assuaged; yet there are times when my impatience threatens my reason, and when my love nearly overpowers me. Rest assured I shall expedite the mission which now separates us, and when I again clasp your hand, I will not relinquish it until the voice of the church has pronounced it my own."

Such was the message which Agatha Eristoun received, and such was the cause which she believed detained her cousin from her side.

Yet there was another who could not be blinded by such pretexts, even had they come to his knowledge.

Williams, the detective, had followed closely upon the track of the fugitive, and more than once he believed he had him in his toils. Yet the Protean phases which the ingenuity of Walter Manning enabled him to assume, completely baffled the shrewdness of the officer, and he was forced to follow his prey across the Atlantic to effect his capture.

The detective left the shores of America in the firm belief that Miss Eristoun's lover had preceded him but a few days, and that by means of the faster sailing vessel which carried him he should reach the other side almost as soon as the person he sought; but instead of this he had been thrown from the right track, and was making a fruitless journey across the water.

Walter Manning indeed took passage upon an outward-bound steamer, but he only remained abroad until the vessel got out of American waters, when, on a specious pretext, he got transferred to an inward-bound vessel, and, with all possible secrecy and despatch, returned to the vicinity of Broadacres, to fulfill the deep-laid plans which engrossed him, and which he had staked everything to accomplish.

Though these events occurred before the trans-Atlantic telegraph came into successful use, and when, in consequence, Walter Manning might reasonably calculate upon three or four weeks' immunity from the pursuit of Williams or his agents, he yet judged it expedient not to present himself openly at Broadacres; but being established in a place of security, he opened communication with his servant, and waited with feverish impatience for an opportunity to put his plans into immediate execution.

With a delicacy and kindness of heart which did him infinite credit, the detective had carefully concealed from Miss Eristoun's knowledge the fact that her proposed husband rested under the dark imputation of murder. She believed all her cousin's representations, and though there were spies about her home waiting for his reappearance, she was quite ignorant of the fact, and led as quiet and as happy an existence as the circumstances would allow.

For days, and even weeks, the search for the body of the murdered stranger had been continued, but to no purpose; and at last, wearied with their fruitless endeavors, the task was given over, and the community settled back into its old accustomed ways, believing that the mystery connected with the murderer and his victim would be for ever unsolved.

Meanwhile the household at Broadacres had been increased by the arrival of one who was destined to act a most important part in the life history of her friend and *confidante*, Agatha Eristoun.

In the French convent where the heiress of Broadacres had been placed, there was also a young lady of American birth and parentage, who, like Miss Eristoun, was sent thither for the same purpose as herself.

The beauty of Ernestine Tudor had, at their first meeting, won the heart of Agatha, and her bright, piquant manners, her vivacious conversation, and her good-natured sallies of wit, afterward most strongly recommended their possessor to her love and friendship.

Fortune, which had heaped her favors so lavishly upon the American heiress, had been chary of her gifts to her brilliant *compatriote*, and it was generally understood in the convent that Mlle. Tudor was maintained there at the expense of a gentleman of great wealth, but advanced age, and unmarried, who contemplated making the beautiful portionless orphan his wife, at the expiration of her school-days.

On more than one occasion Miss Tudor had spoken upon this subject with her friend Agatha, and at each interview she had not hesitated to declare that the prospect before her was utterly repugnant to her tastes and wishes; and while her companions were anticipating with pleasure their emancipation from the restraints of the convent, and their appearance in the gay world without, Ernestine Tudor would either laughingly bid them enjoy the present, for they knew not what might await them in the future, or she would fall into temporary moodiness and absence of mind which ill-befitted and was indeed a stranger to the light-hearted girl.

This circumstance had opened the impulsive heart of Agatha, ever beating as it did with the liveliest, most generous sympathy toward all who were in any way perplexed, and when she was so suddenly summoned to return to America, she had exacted a solemn assurance from her friend that she would follow her to Broadacres, at the expiration of the school year, and where, under the matronly eye of Mrs. Masterton, they would be to each other for a time as sisters, and renew the vows of friendship they had exchanged while at the convent.

Miss Tudor's return to her native land took place shortly after the arrival of Agatha, and true to her promise, she came to Broadacres, where she was received with open arms by her friend.

Ernestine Tudor's bright presence was especially grateful to the saddened Agatha at this time. Her vivacity, her spirit, and her apparent sound-hearted sense, seemed to effectually remove the melancholy which, since her return, had preyed upon Agatha's spirits, and but a few days elapsed before the beneficial change became apparent to all.

Such, in appearance, was the friend whom the heiress of Broadacres had taken to her home and heart with the whole-souled frankness of true friendship, but in truth she clasped to her bosom a deadly serpent, who would ere long encompass her in its venomous toils, and with the poisonous slime of falsehood destroy the sweetest fountains of her life.

Under the mask of beauty, grace, wit and innocence, the most consummate art and craft were concealed. Apparently all heart and feeling, there were few actions of Ernestine Tudor's life which were not dictated by ambition and self-interest. Her affection was the calculating emanation of intrigue, and her impulsive, innocent outbursts of joy and sorrow were practised *roles*, whose effects were calculated to a nicety.

She had responded to Agatha Eristoun's friendly advances with delight, for her crafty nature told her that here was an opportunity for her to exercise her powers greatly to her own advancement, and so successfully did she play her part, that both the noble, upright Agatha and the calm, experienced Mrs. Masterton were completely deceived.

Wealth, and the attainment of that power which wealth confers upon its possessor, were the favorite objects of Ernestine Tudor's ambition. To possess them she would shrink from no artifice, be baulked by no opposition. Intrigue and duplicity were such integral parts of her character, that she preferred to have recourse to them even when there seemed no object to be gained thereby.

In proof of this may be cited the rumor respecting her union with her wealthy guardian. That personage was entirely a creature of her own perverted imagination, or, if his existence had any foundation in fact, it could be traced to the kind offices of a distant and aged relative, who, out of pure benevolence and the most disinterested motives, allowed her a yearly stipend, and made such other provisions for her welfare as his wisdom dictated.

Yet this matrimonial farce seemed to be the young lady's favorite theme, and she was never at a loss to employ it to increase the interest which her beauty and wit threw around her. Particularly when in the society of Agatha Eristoun would she descant upon the misery of ill-assorted marriages, and the susceptible sympathies of Agatha, as well as the romantic interest which usually attaches to a beautiful young girl exposed to such a caprice of fate, readily accomplished the desired effect upon the heart and mind of the unsuspecting *confidante.*

Twenty-four hours had not elapsed after the arrival of Ernestine Tudor at Broadacres, before the two friends had been put in mutual possession of the various incidents and experiences which had befallen both since their separation two months before.

Ernestine had little to relate save the various little gossipy events which transpired during her voyage. She painted in high colors, however, the various thoughts and reflections to which a flirtation with a fellow-voyager gave rise, and dwelt with peculiar pathos and much effect upon the cruel state wherein she found her heart, imprisoned as it was in the iron cage of duty, and denied the pleasure of a single throb responsive to one which for her sake beat with youthful fire and devotion.

Agatha, in return, failed not to relate all that had transpired at Broadacres since her arrival. With minuteness she detailed every incident and experience; spoke of the relations existing between her cousin and herself; declared her unaccountable repugnance to the union; narrated at length every circumstance connected with the stranger's tragic disappearance, but only casually referred to her cousin's absence.

The quick perceptions of Ernestine Tudor, sharpened by her natural moral obliquity, quickly perceived that all was not as it should be with her friend. She was convinced that some fraud or deception was busily at work, compassing unworthy ends, and she immediately resolved to make herself mistress of the situation as soon as possible, and out of the material she should discover to erect a structure upon which she could herself climb to a higher eminence.

She had no mean resources at command, and with the will to use them unscrupulously and indefatigably, would it be possible for her to fail of success?

"Not while I have life, health and beauty to aid me!" she said aloud, as with almost impious exultation she looked triumphantly into the mirror which reflected her matchless face and form.

She leaned her head on her hand as she thus stood before the toilet bureau, and mused for a long time without moving a muscle.

Rapidly reviewing the situation spread out before her, she seized upon the most salient points, and resolved to begin the congenial task of intrigue upon the morrow.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SORTIE AND MINE.

A STORY OF THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

BY W. O. STODDARD.

"A thousand thanks, my dear Henri," said the young German, as he turned the precious railway pass over and over in his hand. "This American Minister is a splendid fellow, and your acquaintance with him has been worth something. Now I shall escape this horrible siege. Hurra for the Rhine! How I wish you and Louis were going with me."

"Not me, Becker, my friend; our place is here. I care very little for that, since Lauri and Mathilde and the old people are safe south of the Loire. You too will soon be in a place of safety. I only hope that you will not be compelled to come back as one of our besiegers."

"Little fear of that. I must do my duty and go where I am sent, but I love your Paris too well, German as I am, to have any heart for battering it down. Carl Becker will never be a real enemy to any Frenchman, whatever he may have been to your Emperor that was."

"No more on that head, Carl, my boy, and you must make haste now. Give my love to Katrina, and tell her that I shall fight as hard as ever I can against her darling king and these swarms of her destroying countrymen."

"She will love you none the less for that, I think," said Carl. "Good-bye."

The two strong right hands were wrung hard for a moment, but no other word was spoken. Only sound and true hearts could have been proof against the prevailing international bitterness, nor is it unlikely that if Carl Becker's friendship was supported by thoughts of dark eyes now watching beyond the Loire, Henri De Rosat had been stimulated in his good offices by the prospect of sending a message to blue ones over the Rhine.

The De Rosats, though patriotic, had been wise, and they had left in Paris only those of the family who were able to fight the Germans as well as help consume the stores of provisions—the only reliable garrison of the beautiful city.

Carl was safe, thanks to the American Minister, but the bitter siege dragged on through week after week of the terrible winter, until the enemy within began slowly to wax even more menacing, in its deadly silence, than the thundering foe without. The famine was likely to prove stronger than King William.

Henri De Rosat had seen little of his brother Louis since the siege began, for Louis was an officer of the engineers, and his duty had kept him on the outer lines, but one frosty morning they met in the Place Vendome. The brothers had really too much to say to talk a great deal, but each, as he looked in the other's eyes, could discern that deep and mournful shadow of the siege which will never be forgotten by any of those whose lives were darkened under it.

"You keep your flesh marvellously, Louis," said Henri. "I am daily growing thin, both in soul and body."

"Because you are penned in the city," said Louis, "while every day I can see beyond the siege from the fortifications."

"But the Germans, Louis; you see them also."

"Yes, but I am mining now-a-days, and I make myself merry by thinking that perhaps I shall dig my way under them and come out into the bright world beyond. I believe I could do that, or anything else, to escape the siege. How I envy those balloon men. They get out."

"We too may get out," said Henri; "my gay hussars and I are to have our chance to-morrow, in the sortie."

"Your gay hussars?"

"Yes, indeed; we have eaten our horses, but we shall charge to-morrow in our hussar uniform. Perhaps we shall capture a mount. I could charge a milliard of Uhlans if I saw any hope of cutting through."

"You will not. We shall none of us get out. The city is doomed."

These last words came in a deep, solemn, almost sepulchral voice, and the brothers turned quickly as they recognized it. A tall, broad, blue-eyed man, in a dark blouse, stood near them.

"Dr. Spielburg!" exclaimed Louis. "Why, man alive, I thought you had been killed."

"They will not give me a chance. I look too much like a German, and so, because I am a physician as well, I am forced to do hospital duty, instead of fighting these Vandals that have burned my home in Alsace."

"That is good duty for you too," said Henri—"the best of duty."

"But I learn things there, and I have learned that Paris must fall."

The brothers looked at their stern, sad-faced friend, and at each other; and as the shadow of the siege settled more and more heavily over them, they muttered only a few more sentences, and separated to their duties.

That was a long day to Henri de Rosat, but it would have been longer, had it not been spent in preparations for the grand sortie on the morrow. He worked, like all the rest, with a fierce and feverish impatience, which found relief in repeating over and over the most trivial duty. Then came the long, sleepless, hungry night; but that too passed, and the sharp, clear, frosty morning found the young officer leading his dismounted hussars rapidly across the frozen mud. Already they were beyond the outer line of defences, and the dim but growing light showed them more and more clearly the bristling lines of circumvallation upon which they were to be hurled—those lines whose steady pressure had been strangling Paris. The artillery was already at work. Now and then the *mitrailleuse* sent its sharp rattle, through the intervals in the cannon roar, and the sound seemed to work almost a madness of excitement in the hot heart of the young Frenchman.

The Germans were advancing. Not even earth-works were to separate the combatants. That was something to be thankful for. Henri could see the spiked helmets flash in the sun that was now coming up from behind the German camps.

"Through the ranks of men, through the lines beyond—oh, if only a way could be broken through!"

Beyond, Henry was sure, was the strength of the new armies of Republican France. Over there there was victory and hope, and no shadow of the siege, or of the wide wings of the famine.

The balls were falling thick and fast now, and so were the men on both sides, and the rising sun shone red and lurid through the clouds of battle smoke. Hours went by, for the struggle was extended over a wide area, and there were many fierce fluctuations of success and failure, but as yet Henri and his hussars were compelled to fight on foot. Long hours they were, and all the while Henri could hear or feel nothing but the urging instinct within him that seemed continually shouting, "Forward!"

Then came a maddening turn of the battle, a whirl of doubt and disorder, and with it a cloud of charging Uhlans that seemed to be sweeping all before them.

"If they do," thought Henri, "I must go back to the siege and the shadow of the famine," and with all his might he hoarsely screamed:

"Forward!"

It was a mad, unmilitary thing to do, but the frenzied rush of the French foot fairly staggered and for a moment broke the charging column of horsemen.

All the soul of the young Frenchman seemed absorbed in his one idea, mixed as it was with swift thoughts of faces beyond the Loire and over the Rhine.

"We shall cut through," he exclaimed, as he struck aside a long lance and hewed at its bearer.

But just then a flash of lightning seemed to come down through the smoke and out of the reverberating thunder of the guns, and Henri felt himself so dazzled and blinded by its sudden blaze that for a few moments he lost the record of events. He only knew that he was now on horseback, savagely cleaving his way through ever increasing swarms of German horsemen, and urging his frantic charger over inconceivable difficulties of field-work and fortification.

The siege was behind him, he was sure of that, and he cared very little what was before. If he cut his way out to the southward, he should join the army of the Loire, and if to the northward, he could cross the Rhine, and Katrina was there, and Carl. At one moment it appeared as if he had been fighting for ages, and then as if his desperate charge had just begun.

"A little further—" he thought, but just then he felt his horse give way under him, as if some shot had swept him bodily into space, and Henri knew that he was falling. Such a fall—so very long and far!

Could it be?

Yes, there was no shock. The terrible descent had been broken by something soft, and Henri heard voices around him.

"Yes, Major Becker, your friend is all right. It was a terrible cut that, but he will come to himself soon, now the fever is going down. He must have good care, to pay him for sending you out to us. How is your shoulder to-day?"

"Oh, Carl, he will get well?"

"Yes, Katrina, dear; and he may be thankful to have escaped from Paris even by so hard a way as this."

"Carl? Katrina?" faintly exclaimed Henri. "Are you here? Where am I?"

Neither Carl nor Katrina could have exactly related what was said or done in the next few moments, Henri least of all; but as his brain grew clearer, the young Frenchman learned that for ten days he had been lying in a German field-hospital, delirious from a sabre cut in the head, and that, by rare fortune, both he and Carl, who had been wounded in the same great sortie struggle, had been nursed by Katrina herself, for she had given her services to the wounded almost since the beginning of the war.

"Now I have my reward," she said.

"Bless you, Katrina!" said Henri. And then he added:

"Poor Louis! I have cut my way through, but he is still in Paris, and the American Minister cannot send him out. Poor Louis! He does not command a Hussar company."

Evidently Henri's brain still suffered from the sabre cut, but he was right about poor Louis. That morning he and Dr. Spielburg met again in the Place Vendome.

"De Rosat, my dear fellow," said the surgeon, "you use too much stimulus; you are a ghost already."

"But you don't know, Spielburg; we are working underground like moles, in the dark and cold, and I do not know at what moment we may break in on their countermines, or be blown higher than this column here."

"Mining? Ah! Well, you must be careful; you cannot dig your way out, you know."

"Perhaps I shall," said Louis, with a weary, melancholy half smile; and the stern doctor shook his head doubtfully as the officer of engineers turned on his heel and strode away toward those outer lines over which the shadow from the city had already crept and settled.

Mine and countermine. Each side felt sure that the other was working at that; but the French did more than the Germans, in very fear of what might be, and Louis De Rosat had become a very enthusiast in his subterraneous duties. His immediate superior was an unmilitary ignoramus, whose political noisiness had given him his epaulets, and he too had imbibed a vague faith in the importance of digging deep and digging far.

It was night when Louis De Rosat returned to relieve his over-worked alternate in command at the mine; but, as he stood on the rampart of the fort for a moment, it seemed to him that he could see, in spite of the darkness, away over into that outer world beyond the German lines and the suffocating siege.

"Henri?" he muttered. "Nobody knows what became of him. I wonder if he got through, with his hussars. They sent out three balloons yesterday. If they can fly over, why should not we dig under? I must go down now. Spielburg is a fool—a man must take a little brandy and absinthe before going to dig in a hole like that. The men are tired to-night, and the rations were short to-day. I will take a spade myself."

In a few moments Louis found himself in the long, dim-lighted, narrow passage, that was being bored through the earth in the direction of the nearest German works. Wasted labor, for not a German was burrowing within a mile of them.

Never before had the damp, earthy smelling tunnel seemed so gloomily, weirdly long, and, to Louis' utter surprise, it was deserted entirely. Not a human being did he see, though the scanty lights were burning, blue and dim, in the foul air. He was alone in the mine.

There lay the tools, however, for he had now made his way to the further terminus, and the water was faintly trickling down on them from the rudely timbered archway overhead.

"I at least will work," he said to himself. "I am ahead of time, and they will soon be here."

Short rations and long labor had apparently made no diminution in his strength, or it may be that the brandy sustained him, for Louis dug away with the power and persistence of some iron-limbed machine. He knew the men would come to help him, and he had a strong feeling that no time was to be lost. As he tore down the soft earth and loose gravel with pick or spade, he cast it hurriedly behind him, for the men to take away in their barrows; but it was long before they arrived, and he had so piled it up as almost to wall himself in.

Then he heard voices, and knew by the ring of tools that the men were there, and had begun their work, but he never paused.

"If we could only make such headway as this all the while, we would dig to the Rhine in a week," he said aloud, and he plied his spade with more frantic energy than ever.

The men too, as if animated by the example of their officer, toiled as Louis had never known them toil before; but for all that, they were compelled to send for another and another squad of helpers, to keep pace with the avalanche of matter that was poured back into the mine by the wonderful work of their leader.

"More men!" shouted Louis. "I feel as if I could make work for a regiment. I am going deeper now under them all, and if no water comes in, we shall be beyond their lines by daybreak."

There was now no sound in the long tunnel but the rattle of the barrows, the click of the spades, and the loud, thick breathing of the diggers. Louis alone was working in front, and he could have laughed, if there had been time, to think how rapidly he was pushing his mine under the very feet of the besieging Germans.

It was a long night, and sometimes Louis half wondered that no relief came; but he was not at all fatigued as yet, and as for his men, he had never seen such willing fellows. Then he thought of Henri, and the family beyond the Loire, and wondered when the siege would be over.

"All Paris could get out through this mine, or we could let in all France by it," he muttered, "but it seems as if I had been digging here for a week. There's no such thing as knowing when it is day away down here in the mine. Ah, what is that?"

His exclamation seemed to bring its own answer, and Louis dropped his spade in astonishment, for a dim but fast increasing ray of light came pouring through the thin and crumbling wall of earth in front of him.

"I must have dug out into a valley of some kind, and that may be bad. But what is this? Iron? Little bars? How came they here, at the end of the mine?"

He grasped the bars firmly in his hands and pressed his face against them, for broad daylight was now pouring through them into the mine, and all his men had swiftly fled and disappeared.

Poor Louis! His was a bitter disappointment, for right in front of him, in long and serried array, were slowly glittering by the lances of German horsemen and the spiked helmets of German foot.

"I have missed my distance, alas! and come out among them!"

"Louis, my poor boy, I am glad you have stopped digging, there is no use for it now."

A hand was on his shoulder, and Louis replied, for he knew the voice:

"Why not, Dr. Spielburg? What does all this mean?"

"Mean? Why, that the siege has ended, and Paris is now within the German lines. You are at the front window of the old *Maison de Sante* on the *Rue de Rivoli,* and King William's troops are marching in. He is Emperor William now."

"And I? What does it all mean?"

"It means that your digging and your bad food and your brandy ended as I told you they would, and you have worked your way out of the siege for the past three weeks under my own care. You would have mined out of it, if I had left any tools in your reach. I half thought yesterday, that your fit would break in a day or two."

"Then the siege is over?"

"Over."

"Doctor," sharply exclaimed Louis, "do you see that Uhlan Major, on the white horse? That is Carl Becker."

"Yes; I have already had a letter from him. Henri is safe and well, and may soon be at liberty now."

Louis loosed his hold on the grating, and turned his eyes away from the glittering column.

"Doctor," he said, "tell me about it some other time. I'm tired out now. I'll go back into the mine and lie down. Put out the lights, please."

"Somewhat too much at once," said Dr. Spielburg to himself; "but I think there's no doubt that I can bring him around, now that the siege is over. To think that so many of our poor fellows should have developed these precise symptoms. I shall write a paper about it. I'm glad now that they put me at hospital work."

THE WILBURY GHOST STORY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

The Rev. Dr. Doubtnot sat in his study preparing his sermon for the next morning, when some one tapped at the door, and when he cried, Come in, opened it half an inch, and said:

"Some gentlemen on particular business, sir."

"Show them in, Jane," said the doctor, and the next moment six young men, very young most of them, entered in single file and bowed low, staring at the doctor meanwhile as people stare at curiosities in museums.

"Good-afternoon, gentlemen," said the doctor. "Glad to see you. Be seated."

The gentlemen bowed and sat down. The doctor noticed that one or two of them looked curiously out into the garden, through the long French window of the study, as they settled into their chairs.

Then all looked at one pale young man in a white neck-tie, and he on the instant turned very red, and became cross-eyed and pigeon-toed and round-shouldered, in an apparent effort to hide himself within himself, after the manner of very young men who, having joyously undertaken a prominent and public part, find that their hour has come, and people are ready for them.

The doctor was used to young clergymen, and young lecturers, and young graduates. He, so to speak, snuffed a speech from afar. He smiled blandly, crossed his legs, and looked toward the young man with a sort of encouraging inclination of his head, and was nowise astonished to see a roll of manuscript emerge from the breast of his visitor's coat, as he arose to his feet, nor to hear him begin, in a choked and husky voice, in this wise:

"Reverend and Respected Sir: You see before you the representatives of the Scientific Club of Wilbury, a body of men who would dare and suffer contumely and torture in the cause of truth.

"We know, as all great thinkers must, that the pioneers of any great cause must be reviled. We are willing to be the laughing-stock of any ignorant scoffers who cling to old beliefs, as those strange things which divide the borders of animal and vegetable life cling to the wave-washed rocks. Onward is our motto. Excelsior is our watchword."

"What can this young man be driving at?" asked the doctor of himself.

"Far be it from us," continued the reader, warming up, getting his voice, and strengthening himself by degrees, as the 'stage fright' wore away—"far be it from us, Reverend Sir, to reject, in the absurd pride of our own poor wisdom, facts attested to by one whom we respect so highly as we respect you. Your testimony—the testimony of one who is the pride of all who know him—who is acknowledged to be an authority in Theology and in Science, before whom all must bow—must indeed be accepted by all. We humbler neophytes timidly present ourselves before you to learn, and not to doubt. 'There are more mysteries in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.' William Skakespeare."

"I never have been so bewildered," said Dr. Doubtnot to himself—"never."

The young man read on:

"While it is popularly supposed to be a mark of wisdom to ridicule the belief that departed spirits can revisit this earth, still there have been in all ages men of erudition who believed it possible. We could instance many cases, but will content ourselves with simply alluding to the fact, which somewhat subdued our surprise when we learnt that you were added to the number. And we are here to-day to beg you, in the name of our devotion to the truth, to give your experience with those strange visitants from other spheres, to our club, at its next Wednesday evening meeting, in the form of a discourse or lecture.

"Humbly hoping you will grant us the favor, we remain, Reverend Sir, yours, most respectfully,

"The Wilbury Scientific Club."

"Gracious goodness!" said the doctor to himself. "What does it all mean?"

Having finished this paper, the reader plumped himself into his chair again, wiped his forehead, and waited.

The doctor arose and looked at him mildly.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I can see that you intend me a compliment, but I don't understand exactly. You wish me to lecture?"

"Yes, sir," said the reader, "that is our desire. You see, we've heard about those appearances, and we'd like to know more."

"Appearances?" asked the doctor, more mildly yet.

"If you'll excuse the vulgar term, the ghosts, sir—those you've seen, sir. That's the up and down of it, sir," said the member, with a growing color in his face as he watched the astonished doctor.

"But," replied the doctor, "glad as I should be to oblige you, I never saw any ghosts."

The Committee of the Scientific Club stared at one another.

"It's all over town that you did," said one.

"In your own words, sir," said another.

"A very great mistake, gentlemen," said Dr. Doubtnot. "Pray let me hear the story."

The Committee were silent.

Here a young man of braver mould than the rest arose from his seat.

"Professor Tompkins told us," said he. "His wife told him. Why, the whole place knows it. We supposed that you had interviews with spectres; I mean to say sceptres; no, I don't—spectres regularly."

"Oh," said the doctor, "that's why the little boys have been so thick about my gate of evenings. That's why Madge Mahoney told me to suit myself with a new cook. Ah, dear me! Well, it is without foundation, gentlemen. But I will meet you on Wednesday, and having investigated the story, explain how it arose. I owe that duty to myself. I've never seen a ghost, nor do I expect to. Good-day, gentlemen."

The gentlemen departed crest-fallen. The doctor took his hat and cane and went straight to Professor Tompkins, who had heard his story from his wife, who had heard hers from Aunty Green, who had heard her version from Mrs. Black, who had heard hers from Mrs. Bell, who had heard hers from Mrs. Chatter, who had been told the facts of the case by Dr. Doubtnot himself, who had quite forgotten the conversation.

We will omit the "How-d'ye-do's?" and preliminaries, and give the stories as the doctor learnt them.

This is what Professor Tompkins said to the member of the Scientific Club of Wilbury:

"My dear Digby, you don't take me for a man who could swallow any silly old woman's story. I'm not so easily imposed upon as you are aware; but I know whom to trust; and when my excellent friend Doctor Doubtnot tells people that he is in constant communication with the spirits of departed persons, I'm bound to believe him. So are you, sir—so are you. Remember last Sunday's sermon. No screw loose in that head, sir. Fine man. Thorough theologian. And yet it is astonishing. They come into his study, sir, and sit there, male and female, all in their shrouds. And he talks to them, and advises them. Wonderful! wonderful! True as Gospel, sir!"

Member of club:

"Wonderful! undoubted testimony yours, and the doctor's. I shall mention it to our fellows."

What Mrs. Tompkins said to the professor:

"Oh, my dear, such a story! and Doctor Doubtnot told it himself to dear Mrs. Chatter. He has been seeing spirits lately, especially that of poor Mrs. Spratt, who died awhile ago, you know. They come to his study, and walk up and down his garden, and he talks to them by the hour, and is not the least scared. Mrs. Spratt came the day of her funeral, in search of religious consolation. Wonderful!"

Professor: "Marvellous! marvellous! I could not believe it without such proof. And the doctor told it himself. Well, well, wonders will never cease, my dear."

What Aunty Green told Mrs. Professor Tompkins:

"Well, I never did! Couldn't have believed it, only I've been told by them I can't misdoubt. Doctor Doubtnot told Mrs. Chatter, and she told Mrs. Bell; Mrs. Bell told Mrs. Black, and she told me, that poor Mrs. Spratt's ghost walks. Came back to earth the day she was buried, and appeared to Doctor Doubtnot in his garden, before his study window; told him she wasn't saved, I believe; regretted her want of Christian faith during life, and stood there wringing her hands and crying. No doubt others have been too, but I never say what I an't certain on; an't no talker, I an't. This is what them new views comes to: a walking garden paths in her shroud, and moaning."

What Mrs. Black told Aunty Green:

"I always said there was something in ghost stories, always. Nobody can fail to believe good Doctor Doubtnot's testimony. He told Mrs. Chatter, and she told Mrs. Bell, and she told me, that the evening after Mrs. Spratt's funeral, he saw her standing in his garden, in her shroud. She always was a sort of free-thinker, I'm afraid, and I suppose she can't rest."

Aunty Green: "Lawful sakes!—who ever heerd tell? My goodness!"

What Mrs. Bell told Mrs. Black:

"Any one told you the ghost story? No? Why, I must then. The day of poor Mrs. Spratt's funeral, Doctor Doubtnot tells Mrs. Chatter that he saw a woman dressed in white in his garden path, and could not account for it in any natural way."

What Mrs. Chatter told Mrs. Bell:

"I'm so provoked. Doctor Doubtnot was called away in the middle of a first-rate ghost story. He was telling me how he saw a white figure standing in his garden path, the evening after Mrs. Spratt's funeral. I suppose he was about to account for it somehow, but he was obliged to go. It was quite exciting."

What Dr. Doubtnot said to Mrs. Chatter:

"Yes, yes, my dear Madam. No doubt many people actually believe that they have seen what is popularly called a ghost. We are all liable to certain superstitious terrors. Now, the evening after poor Mrs. Spratt's funeral, I sat down at my study window, in the dark. The night was starlit, but there was no moon. I had been thinking of our deceased neighbor, as was natural, and on casting my eyes out into the garden, I saw a tall white shape standing directly in the centre of the path. 'Optical illusion,' said I to myself. I rubbed my eyes, but it was there still, and I thought I saw it move."

Servant entering in haste:

"If you please, Doctor, that sick gentleman wants you in a hurry."

Doctor departs, to give religious consolation.

End of ghost story, as given by Rev. Dr. Doubtnot to the Scientific Club of Wilbury, after patient investigation:

"When I saw it move, I arose, conscious of a sort of unpleasant nervous sensation in my hair. 'Come, come,' said I. 'You are too old to be frightened by something white, like a child.' I walked down the path with this cane in my hand, and advancing to the white object, gave it a poke. It fell to the ground, and I discovered that it was a sheet which had been hung to dry upon a large lilac bush, and at a distance actually assumed the outlines of a woman's form. In conclusion, let me add that no one has uttered an intentional falsehood. The story has only grown by repetition, as all stories will, and I shall work the matter into my sermon next Sunday, in a manner which I hope may prove beneficial to those who believe all they hear to the discredit of their neighbors, as well as those who give credence to superstitious tales."

And thus the Wilbury ghost story came to an end. And the little boys ceased to haunt the lane without the parsonage, and Madge Mahony returned to the doctor's kitchen, and all was as it had been.

A THANKSGIVING SURPRISE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Dear me! I wish I could go home to Thanksgiving," said Adelaide Kent.

Addie Kent worked all day in a great shirt factory where the sewing machines hummed like a bin full of bumble-bees, and the steam shook the floors; and all for daily bread.

"I know just how it looks there," said Adelaide to herself. "If I shut my eyes I can see the great old kitchen fire, and the tins all shining on the shelves; and I can see dear old grandma in her black stuff dress and silver spectacles, and little lame Benny whittling out wooden toys. Oh, if I could only go. But Mr. Secor can't spare a girl out of the factory just now, and, O dear, I may wish and wish in vain. But, girls,"—she spoke these last two words out loud, with a merry sparkle through the tears that filled her eyes, to the room full of girls around—"I've such an idea in my head! We'll get up a Thanksgiving dinner for old Mr. Dallas."

Old Mr. Dallas, be it premised, was a rheumatic old bachelor who had the top room in Mrs. Dunsmore's cheap boarding-house, and "found" himself—mostly in bread and cheese and cold water. Some of the gay girls who boarded there called him a miser; some called him an eccentric genius; but all agreed in the primary fact that he was very poor, very rheumatic, and very solitary.

"It isn't as if he were a young man, you know," said she. "We can steal into his room and lay the table in a little while, and it will be so nice to surprise him. We'll subscribe a little all around and buy a small turkey, and I can cook it on Mrs. Dunsmore's kitchen fire; and I know a splendid receipt for pumpkin pie; and—and you know, girls, if we can't go home and have a good old-fashioned Thanksgiving, all by ourselves, we can at least help to make somebody else happy. Why, I don't suppose Mr. Dallas has had a *real* Thanksgiving dinner for ten years!"

And so Adelaide Kent busied her kind little heart and fertile brain in contriving a pleasant surprise for the solitary old bachelor in the upper floor, who sat in his overcoat to save firing, and ate dry bread, with cheese when he could get it, and when he couldn't, without.

How she trotted about in the gray twilight of Thanksgiving eve, with a scarlet hood tied over her chestnut-brown braids, and her cheeks and lips rivaling its vermilion hue, while on her arm she carried a huge covered basket—Mrs. Dunsmore's market basket, in truth and in fact—and when she came home, the whole swarm of girls gathered about her to investigate its contents.

And to hear the knot of pretty young conspirators whispering and buzzing together, you would have thought the whole world would penetrate their mystery long before the hour for its fruition was ripe, except old Miles Dallas, who sat up in his room, shivering in the frosty air, with only the reflection of the street lamps against the walls to light the dreary hours.

"The world is getting too hard for me," thought the poor old man. "There don't seem to be any place for me—and perhaps I'd be better out of it than in."

But Mrs. Dunsmore, the landlady, came up in a great hurry the next day.

"I hope you'll excuse me, Mr. Dallas, I'm sure," she said, dropping a flurried courtesy, for the old man had a stately sort of air with him when he pleased, "but—but little Mike's gone home to spend Thanksgiving, and I've no mortal soul to send this basket of provisions to poor Mrs. Thistlegalie by, and if it wouldn't be troubling you too much, Mr. Dallas, may be the walk would do you good."

And Miles Dallas, willing to be the bearer of good news to one perhaps older and poorer than himself, rose courteously up, and went on Mrs. Dunsmore's kindly mission.

But no sooner had the door closed behind his halting footsteps, than the swarm of merry damsels fluttered in, with Addie Kent at their head; a cheerful fire of anthracite coal glowed and crackled in the grate; the room was swept and garnished with brilliant autumn leaves, and the table spread with a spotless damask cloth, while in the centre stood the monthly rose.

"That will do for the present," said Addie. "Now, girls, shut the door and let the room get warm, and I'll just run down and see to the turkey and pumpkin pie."

It was quite dusk, and snowing softly without, when Louie Holland came dancing down into the kitchen of the boarding-house where Addie was busy at work dishing the turkey, with her sleeves rolled up above the elbows, and a big bib-apron of striped ticking enveloping her trim little figure.

"Oh, Addie," she cried, "he's come back!"

"Who has come back?" Addie asked, drenching the little brown carcass of the bird with a shower of unctuous gravy from a tin spoon.

"Mr. Dallas."

"What did he say?"

"Why, I didn't see him when he came in, but there he sits by the fire, as composed as if a fire was an every-day thing."

"How does he look? Surprised?"

"I can't see, it's so dark, and there is only the firelight in the room. Shall I light a lamp?"

"Not yet," said Addie. "Wait until the table is all set, and then we'll illuminate. He's a philosopher, you see, and takes things coolly. Now stand aside, Louie, and let me carry the centre dish of the feast up."

In poured the girls, three or four in number, Addie directing, and each doing her part, until the board was spread with the dainty meal—the turkey brown and crisp, the celery nodding overhead, the red apples and crimson-tinted jelly lending color to the scene, and the pumpkin and cranberry pies shining like gold and ruby at either end of the board.

And then, when it was all arranged, Addie Kent went softly up behind the silent figure in the arm-chair that had watched the whole twilight scene in mute surprise, and putting her arms around his neck, left a soft, fragrant kiss on his cheek.

"It was *my* surprise, sir," she said. "And oh! I hope you'll enjoy your Thanksgiving dinner, for—"

But a cry of surprise from Louie Holland made her look around; and there, in the door-way, with the empty basket on his arm and a loaf of bread wrapped in brown paper in his hand, stood old Miles Dallas.

And the impostor in the arm-chair rose up, as much embarrassed as herself.

"I—I beg your pardon," he said, "but I couldn't help myself. I had no idea you were going to kiss me; it was all exactly like a scene in the Arabian Nights, and I expected every minute it would all vanish through a crack in the floor. And—"

But Addie, without staying to see how tall and straight and handsome this usurping hero was, had precipitately escaped. And Miles Dallas and his nephew from Cuba ate the Thanksgiving dinner together with a relish.

"You will pardon me?" pleaded Eugene Dallas, when Addie came in, demure and blushing, to clear away the dishes.

"If you will pardon *me.*"

"It was very stupid of me," said Eugene; "but I'll try to make amends in the dish-washing line, if you'll let me."

And before their domestic duties were concluded, Addie had learned that Eugene had returned from Cuba a rich man, with the intention of taking Uncle Miles back to end his days in that summer land.

"But he thinks I had better stay here," said Eugene, with a sigh.

"So do I," said Addie, almost instinctively. "I mean—"

"*Do* you, really?" cried Eugene, brightening up at once. "Then I'll stay."

And the next Thanksgiving-day Addie invited Mrs. Dunsmore and all the girls to dine with her in her brown-stone house on Gramercy Place, when she presided with the grace of a little queen, as Mrs. Eugene Dallas.

And this is what came of that kiss on Thanksgiving-day.

SONG OF OUR AGE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE

Will is ironed on my forehead,
Not a muscle is at rest,
Billows of determination
Roll within my ocean-breast,
"Evermore to Do" their shouting,
And as they are firmly hurled
On opposing forces, fuller
Man is master of the world.
Steam inventions, adaptations,
Manufacturing, mining true,
Tunnelling mountains, bridging rivers,
Edening where marshes grew,
Terrible Arctic ice realms conquered,
Deepest Afric jungles trod,
Even lightning every moment
Borrowed from the hand of God,
All are trophies of my marching,
And vast platforms are enshrined
For the great but sacred boldness
Of the longing Human Mind:
So Earth opens up her history,
So orbed skies their secrets show,
And the Heart is daily swelling
With a more adoring glow—
More adoring, so all neighbors,
And all nations even, feel,
With that worship, as God's music,
Larger love for one another
Through their inmost being steal.
Oh, what rapture is my labor!
Oh, too grand it is for rest!
Not subjective, but *objective*,
Is the passion in my breast;
So with each heave of my muscles
Will material blessings grow;
So will Mind with larger stature
On the vast Thought Mountains glow;
So Humanity's Heart Rivers
Deeper, sweeter, holier flow;
So the Central Star of Bethlehem
Fix and bless all eyes below.

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE HARVEST OF INIQUITY.

It seemed indeed as if Providence had deserted Mr. and Mrs. Hawley, and as if Pedder would have his own way in everything. But in this hour of his supposed triumph, there suddenly came upon his wicked schemes a misfortune which changed completely the face of affairs.

He had met Tom Breeling and taken up the boat, restoring it to its davits, and had worn around to take a new course, with the intention of leaving Desolation for ever, as he had previously proposed, when the cry of "Sail ho!" burst from half a dozen of his men in chorus.

There was no necessity of Pedder's asking the whereabouts of the new-comer. Even as the announcement of her presence ran in his ears, his eyes rested upon her.

She was just in the act of rounding Cape Français, and had advanced barely enough to uncover her whole length, but her appearance was as formidable as her arrival was sudden.

She was a large fore-and-aft schooner, so large that her measurement must have exceeded five hundred tons; but she was so light and airy, her breadth of beam so vast, her bow so sharp, at the same time that her quarters were so roomy, that a practiced eye and one well versed in such matters was necessary to detect at first glance all there was of strength and speed in her model.

Every stitch of her immense spread of canvas was drawing, the wind being well abeam, and she was moving with the speed of a race-horse, opening up the gap between her and the Cape with a velocity suggestive of the flight of an eagle, or of a bullet.

At the close distance to which she had already attained—for she was not two miles away from the yacht at the moment of her discovery—the stranger's leading characteristics were all perceptible at a glance, and they were striking and startling enough. It was not merely that there was something sinister in the build and speed of the schooner, but she carried a throng of men so numerous as to darken her deck—a motley crowd exceeding a hundred—and forward and astern loomed up into plain sight a couple of large cannon mounted upon circular carriages.

"My soul! what is she?" burst involuntarily from the lips of Pedder, as he took in the sinister points of the stranger.

"What a swarm of men she carries!" exclaimed Tom Breeling.

"Is she a ship of war?" asked Miss Pedder, who had just emerged from the cabin.

"She's the Malay Gunner!" cried Pedder now, his face blanching. "Look at those guns!"

A moment of stupefaction succeeded.

Too many stories of the Malay Gunner had been told during the few years preceding, for any one sailing in the East Indies to be ignorant of the well-known features which proclaimed the identity of the famous pirate.

Half a dozen voices around Pedder at once echoed his conclusions.

"Yes, she's the Gunner," said Tom Breeling, with a changing countenance. "To fight her is out of the question. We must run."

He lost no time in acting upon this view, but he might as well have saved himself the trouble. The yacht had scarcely gathered headway upon her new course when the schooner was within a mile of her, and gaining upon her every instant at the rate of three or four knots an hour.

"Our best point is to make the land—to beach her anywhere," said Pedder, as his face became still whiter. "We can neither gain nor keep the open sea with that speed behind us."

"No, no; we can't," assented Tom. "I'll head her for Cape Cumberland, and either drive her upon the rocks there or pass between Sentry-box and the Cape, according to the distance the pirates may be from us."

It would have been hard to decide which of the two—Breeling or his commander—was the most frightened.

"But have we so much to fear from the Gunner?" asked Miss Pedder, when her brother and Tom had squared the yacht away upon her new course. "I've heard that the Gunner is not cruel only when he is resisted."

"He's like all pirates—an Ishmael," replied Pedder hurriedly. "His hand is against every man's. He and his do not care where their booty comes from, so long as they get it."

"But fighting and flight seem equally out of the question. If we run the yacht ashore and escape to the land, the pirates can hunt us down on the island. Is there no better course for us? Couldn't we fraternize with the pirates?"

"Fraternize!" groaned Pedder—"fraternize, with those millions below? Fraternize, with Bantam and his friend, who are friends of the Gunner, raging and cursing behind us? You see at a glance that we must escape capture, or die."

"It's even so," sighed Miss Pedder, with a horrible pang of regret that Bantam had been so basely abandoned. "If we could have known—if we had done differently—"

A ball from the bow-chaser of the schooner passed over the deck of the yacht, barely missing several of the crew.

"A pretty strong hint to heave to," said Pedder.

"And a hint we may as well take," said the old sailor who had served as second mate of the yacht during its voyage from New York. "To get away from the pirates in this way is impossible. They'll be within musket shot of us by the time we reach the Cape."

"The case is indeed desperate, Mr. Shallon," assented Pedder. "But what other course can we take?"

"Why, we can put a bold face on the matter, and meet the pirates as if we had nothing to fear from them. You can say to the Gunner that you took him to be a government cruiser. Your desertion of Bantam is an ugly fact, but, after all, who *is* Bantam, that you should fear his influence with the Gunner? The pirates will not do us any injury if we do not resist them, and they will even accept as recruits any of us who choose to join them. By taking the course I have suggested, we can fraternize with the Gunner and his men, as Miss Pedder has suggested, until such time as we can cut clear of them. As to the treasure below, it would be better to divide it with the Gunner and his men, than to lose every dollar of it in dashing the yacht to pieces on the rocks of Cape Cumberland."

The attention of the trio of listeners to this address was breathless.

"Shallon is right," declared Pedder emphatically. "In the course we are now taking, we shall lose the yacht, the money, and our lives. In the course he proposes, we may save everything essential. We'll go about, and stand back to the schooner."

The decision was at once acted upon, and a deafening yell of rejoicing arose from the deck of the pirate. The two vessels were soon hove to within fifty yards of each other.

"What yacht is that?" asked the Malay Gunner, who, as formidable in size and appearance as ever, had leaped into his shrouds and enforced silence among his followers by a gesture.

"She's the *Enchantress*, of New York, sir," replied Pedder, in his smoothest voice. "We took you to be a British cruiser, but one of my men assures me that you are the Malay Gunner."

"The assurance is perfectly correct," said the Gunner grimly.

"In this case we have nothing to fear, and I turned back just as soon as I felt sure of your identity. The truth is, I have been carrying a sort of free flag myself in these waters, and it has even entered into my thoughts to join you, Mr. Gunner, in case I should fall in with you. This is equivalent to saying that the yacht and everything in her is at your disposal."

"All right," returned the Gunner. "Get out a boat, and come and see me. Stay—you needn't," he added, as his eyes rested more particularly upon Miss Pedder. "I'll come and see *you*."

A few moments later, the Gunner climbed aboard the yacht.

"My name is Pedder—Captain Luke Pedder, sir," said the commander of the yacht, advancing to meet his renowned visitor. "This lady is my sister, Miss Ruth Pedder."

The Gunner saluted the couple with careless indifference.

"Will you walk into the cabin?" continued Pedder, with an anxiety that did not escape the sharp eyes of the pirate.

"With pleasure. But first I will order my lieutenant to get under way for the head of Christmas Harbor, and you had better give a like order."

The orders were given, and Pedder then led the way into his cabin, the Gunner and Miss Pedder following.

"I shall of course place a crew in charge of you until I learn who and what you are," announced the Gunner. "You comprehend that you are my prisoners, of course?"

"Of course," assented Pedder, endeavoring to mask his uneasiness with a smile.

The words were scarcely uttered when there came a rapid tattoo upon the door of one of the state-rooms.

"Ah! what's here?" asked the Gunner.

"Let me out, sir!" called the voice of Mrs. Hawley wildly, as Pedder and his sister remained silent. "Oh, save me! save me!"

"Indeed! somebody in limbo, eh?" queried the Gunner, looking from the changing countenance of Pedder to the still whiter features of his sister.

"She—I—that is—"

"Open the door," ordered the Gunner, cutting short Pedder's stammerings. "I'll see for myself what's going on here."

Pedder had no sooner opened the door—which he did with great visible reluctance—than Mrs. Hawley rushed out and threw herself at the Gunner's feet, clinging to his knees, and crying:

"Oh, save me, sir! save me from this man and his sister!"

"Save you? I'm not much of a saver, Madam. I'm the Malay Gunner."

"I don't care who or what you are, sir! I throw myself upon your protection!"

And as fair as tearful, as beautiful as terrified, and even radiant with the vividness of her emotions, Mrs. Hawley embraced the knees of the Gunner so tightly that he was obliged to sink into a seat to save himself from falling.

"We'll, here's a tempest," growled the Gunner, impressed by the appeal of so much despair and so much loveliness. "Take a seat, Madam, and tell me your story."

This encouragement was sufficient. Mrs. Hawley instantly broke out into a torrent of accusations before which the couple beside her quailed in guilty confusion.

"And now for your views," enjoined the Gunner upon Pedder and his sister, when Mrs. Hawley paused in sheer exhaustion.

Pedder's exposition of affairs was long, rambling and specious, making him out at the best a despicable villain. It afflicted the Gunner to that extent that he finally interrupted it by a gesture of impatience and disgust.

"Enough," he said. "The lady is free, as is her nurse, and she will remain here until my further pleasure. Her baby and her friends shall be restored to her wherever I find them. Your sister can remain here, Captain Pedder, until my mind is made up what to do with her, and you yourself can come off with me to the schooner."

He led the way to the deck, and Pedder nervously followed him.

The two vessels were just coming to anchor in Capt. Cook's old anchorage near the head of the bay, and all eyes were turned upon three figures which had appeared on its northern shore and were gesticulating excitedly for deliverance.

Two of these three figures were recognized by Pedder at a glance, and the recognition caused him to tremble.

They were Fisty Bantam and Mr. Wilber.

"Are there any men here who wish to join my band?" asked the Gunner, as he reached the deck of the yacht and looked around upon its crew.

"Yes, sir—the whole crew, with me at their head," replied Tom Breeling promptly.

Pedder became still more agitated.

"What! are you going to desert me, Tom, after all these years?" he groaned.

"How is this deserting you?" returned Breeling. "I've talked with the men, while you were in the cabin, and they all think they may as well join the Gunner."

"Yes, we do," confirmed Shallon. "By taking this course," he added, in a rapid whisper, "we shall share in the treasure, when it is discovered, and that is no small matter."

"It's all right, I suppose?" asked the Gunner of Pedder. "Pirate for pirate, they'd as soon serve me as you. It's all right, boys," he added, addressing Breeling and the crew. "You can come aboard of the schooner and make yourselves comfortable. My lieutenant and a few of my veterans will at once take charge of the yacht."

The transfer was effected in the course of a few minutes.

"Who are those three men ashore?" then asked the Gunner of his lieutenant.

"I haven't the least idea who they are," was the reply, "but they seem very anxious to come off to us."

"Lower a boat, and I will go and see them," said the Gunner.

The order was obeyed, and the Gunner was soon at the beach. As he leaped ashore from his boat, the three men came forward to meet him, and one of them staggering nearer, seized him by the hand and greeted him with a wildly joyous warmth.

"Why, who are you?" asked the Gunner.

"What! don't you know me? I'm your old friend Bantam."

The Gunner, as he looked upon the thin and haggard figure before him, could hardly believe the evidence of his senses.

"Can *you* be Bantam?" he cried.

"Yes—all that is left of me," said Bantam, smiling feebly. "I've been torn to pieces by chills and fevers for months past—by all the horrors and privations of this abominable wilderness. But the sight of you is medicine. I shall soon be myself again."

"So you will," said the Gunner emphatically, shaking the hand of his ally. "Take a good drink of this," and he produced a flask from his pocket. "It will take the chills out of you."

Bantam took a liberal dram eagerly.

"I should have been here months ago," continued the Gunner. "I fully intended to see you here last November, as agreed upon, but we have been having the worst run of luck that ever afflicted us. You'll excuse my delay, I doubt not, as soon as you hear my account of things—"

"Oh, as to that," interposed Bantam, "no apology or explanation is necessary. I knows you would have been here if it had been possible for you to come. You can explain all these matters to me at your leisure. Your misfortunes, however, can hardly have been equal to mine."

"Indeed!" and the Gunner looked searchingly around. "Where are your men?"

"They are dead."

"Dead! All of them?"

"Every man of them except Kangaroo Jimmy, who is here with me."

"What! is *this* Kangaroo Jimmy? I should never have known him—never!"

He shook hands with Jimmy, and gave him a drink from his flask.

"And who's this third man?" then asked the Gunner, turning his gaze upon Wilber.

"He's a man sent ashore here to die by Pedder—the infernal villain!" replied Bantam fiercely. "He was bound hand and foot, and flung upon the ground to die like a dog."

"Why was he treated in this way?"

"Because he tried to protect Mrs. Hawley from Pedder's brutality. Jimmy and I were also abandoned here to die of starvation, and we set this man free. The treachery of that villain to me will shock you when you hear it."

"I won't hear it then, upon an empty stomach," smiled the Gunner. "The first thing you all need is a good supper—such a supper as my cook can put before you in less than twenty minutes. Come off at once to the schooner."

The movement was at once made, and Bantam and Kangaroo Jimmy were received by the pirates with a deep interest, as well as with an intense wonder. Mr. Wilber was returned to the yacht and to Mrs. Hawley—with what joy to her and to himself, we leave the reader to imagine.

An hour later, when Bantam and Jimmy had supped judiciously, and begun to recover their wonted spirits, the Gunner turned to the former and said:

"Let's hear now, if you feel strong enough, how your affairs reached such a horrible pass. Your luck must have been harder than ours."

Bantam hastened to comply with this demand, narrating the various misfortunes of the preceding year with his usual clearness and vigor.

He told how he had come to Desolation in the *Dover*, with forty-one men, with the double intention of hiding, and of securing the first great fortune of Mr. Aymar, which had been buried there by the pirates; how the winter had killed nearly all of his followers; how Kangaroo Jimmy had finally arrived, with about fifty more runaways; how these had all been killed by the forces of the *Thunderer*; how Hawley had discovered the buried million, and removed it to Sentry-box island; how Mr. Aymar had arrived, with a second million, and joined Hawley; how Pedder and his sister had arrived, and with what purpose; how both of the vast fortunes of Mr. Aymar had been found at Sentry-box island and removed to one of the state-rooms of the yacht; and how Pedder had tried to run away with this treasure, after the treachery and desertion already familiar to the reader.

The emotions with which the Gunner listened to this narration finally culminated in a flaming wrath against Pedder, and when Bantam had concluded the pirate chief leaped to his feet.

"I'll treat that Pedder as he treated you, Bantam," he declared hotly. "I'll send him ashore to die there!"

Going on deck, he ordered a boat to be lowered and manned, called Pedder to his side, and acquainted him with his decision, in such terms and with such a mien that Pedder realized the uselessness of remonstrances.

"Very well," said he. "I would like to see my sister before you send me ashore."

"The request is natural. I will send for her."

Not a word further passed until her arrival upon the deck of the schooner.

"Bantam has told his story, and the Gunner is going to send me ashore to die of cold and hunger," whispered the brother gloomily.

"'Twould be better to die here," replied the sister, in a similar tone, embracing him. "I am ready to die with you."

"Are you? One kiss, then."

This kiss was exchanged and repeatedly duplicated, with the earnestness of a last adieu.

"It's only a moment's pang," whispered Pedder. "Whatever the future is beyond this life—if there is any future—we'll share it together."

He drew his revolver, placed it close to the right temple of his sister, and pulled the trigger.

She fell dead, without a groan.

Then Pedder turned the weapon upon himself, pulling the trigger a second time.

A heavy fall succeeded, and the brother had joined his sister.

For a moment the Gunner stood stupefied, the murder and suicide had been so unexpected, but his stern voice soon pierced the air like a knife.

"Throw over that carrion!" he commanded.

The two bodies were picked up and thrown over the low bulwarks without a remark or a comment, and were carried away seaward by the current, soon disappearing in the darkness of the night which was now settling down rapidly upon the waters.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HOW THE PLOT ENDED.

The moment Miss Dail was set ashore upon Sentry-box island, where Will., Mr. Aymar and Jude had been left to die, the three men hastened toward the shore to meet her.

"Who can she be?" asked Mr. Aymar.

"Evidently some victim of Pedder's wrath who has been sent ashore to die with us," replied Will. sadly.

They soon met the object of their curious wonder, she having advanced toward them, after depositing upon the beach a little bundle she had kept carefully hidden.

The voyage of the young lady out to Desolation in the *Ocean Monarch* had improved her health greatly. She had become plump, rosy and strong, so that all the anguish of the past few hours had not been able to mar seriously her prepossessing appearance.

"You are Mr. Hawley, I suppose?" she said to the foremost of the trio, offering her hand.

Our hero bowed.

"And you are Mr. Aymar, Mr. Hawley's uncle?" she added, turning to the old East-Indian.

Mr. Aymar also bowed, with a heart too full for speech, not only with his own misery, but with the thought that this lovely young woman had been sent to those shores to die of starvation and exposure.

"I am Miss Dail, of New York," she continued, looking from one to the other. "For a few months past I have been a dear friend to Mrs. Hawley, and this is my claim to your consideration. If any other claim is necessary, you have it in the fact that I have been sent here to die with you."

Mr. Aymar opened his arms to the fair young stranger, as a father might have done, and pressed her warmly to his heart, while his tears bathed her face. The heroism of those few words had touched his heart to the core.

"And you have doubtless been sent here, Miss Dail," murmured Hawley, "because of your relations to my wife?"

"Substantially—yes."

"Then accept from me a brother's greeting."

He embraced her with grateful tenderness.

"Before we die, Miss Dail," then said Mr. Aymar, "you will have time to tell us the news of our loved one. She is upon our lips as in our hearts, you see. Can you tell us where she is—if she is living and well—and if she is blessed and happy?"

Will.'s glances mutely repeated these queries, but he could not speak. He could only clutch at his heart, so wildly throbbing—only look at the face of his oracle.

For one moment an awful convulsion shook the form of Miss Dail, and her head sank forward, the blood receding from her features, even from her lips.

Then she drew herself firmly erect, and stood before them with a strength and majesty which only a grandly noble soul can put into a human body.

"You do not know, then, where Mrs. Hawley is?" she demanded.

A look was her answer.

"Then you must prepare for an awful shock!"

The husband and uncle both recoiled from her, with an indescribable sinking at their hearts.

"Oh! she is not dead?" burst from Will.

"No, not dead! I could wish that she had died in one of the first days of your married life, for beyond death is happiness—beyond death is peace and freedom! Your loved one is not dead, my friends; she is not even ill, unless her anguish has made her so within the last hour—"

"Within the last hour?" interrupted both men in chorus.

"You must endure with resignation the great agony I am about to cause you," went on Miss Dail hurriedly. "For my part, I am not hopeless. I will never, never accept any of these horrors as finalities. I will never believe that the GOD of heaven and earth has forsaken us. I will never, never believe that all our lives are to be wrecked by Pedder. And you must share my faith. Be as strong of heart as I am. Look, as I do, to Heaven for its aid and mercy. And now I will tell you where Mrs. Hawley is. She is a prisoner aboard of Pedder's vessel."

The interval of dumb horror that succeeded can be but faintly imagined.

"I half suspected the fact," said Will., when he had regained control of his emotions. "And the yacht is bound—"

"For some coral island of the Pacific."

The wailing of a child suddenly fell upon the hearing of the trio, startling the two men beyond expression. It came from the beach upon which Miss Dail had landed. As soon as Will. and Mr. Aymar could accept the sound as a fact, they looked at Miss Dail for an explanation.

She was smiling through her tears.

"It's Tommy!" she said. "He was named for his mother's uncle Thomas."

The brave, thoughtful girl had left the baby upon the beach, with the intention of announcing its presence at the right moment, as a diversion to her horrible news, and the little fellow had awakened just in time to second her purpose.

"The fact is, you are a father, Mr. Hawley," added Miss Dail, as the bewildered men continued to stare at her, "and the malignant rage of Pedder, which has caused him to seize the mother, has also caused him to set the child ashore to die with us."

The truth had now dawned upon the minds of Will. and his uncle, and they bounded toward the beach, Miss Dail leading the way.

In a few moments more she had caught the bright little fellow to her bosom, and was holding him up to the view of her companions.

And this was Will.'s introduction to his son!

The delighted amazement of our hero and Mr. Aymar was such that for several minutes they were oblivious of their surroundings.

Miss Dail improved this opportunity of saying a few words to Jude.

"Your brother told me, just before setting me ashore, of his relationship to you," she said, offering her hand. "He is very mad and bitter because you will not join him."

"Once I might have done so—God forgive me," sighed Jude. "But I have been too near death lately to ever again dare to live in wickedness."

The movements of the yacht, which was coming around Arched Point to meet its boat, now attracted the notice of the little party, and they watched eagerly the various events that followed—the arrival of the Malay Gunner, the chase, the surrender, and the withdrawal of the yacht and schooner into Christmas Harbor.

When they had vanished, Mr. Aymar, who had recognized the pirate at a glance, could not repress a long sigh of despair.

"Pedder has made friends with the Gunner," he said bitterly. "Nor need we wonder at the fact. There is every affinity between them."

Seating themselves upon some rocks in the most sheltered spot they could find near the water, the three men and Miss Dail fixed their gaze in the direction of Arched Point, and waited for some further manifestation on the part of the yacht and the schooner. The baby cried long and agonizingly, with hunger, and did not cease until its strength was completely exhausted. It was even impossible for Miss Dail to keep it warm, as closely as she pressed it to her bosom, but it finally sank into a sleep of exhaustion.

The day passed, and the night came on—dark and dismal, full of chills, and frightful to contemplate for those who had neither food nor shelter nor wrappings.

"We shall die a terrible death here," remarked Mr. Aymar, in a voice that quivered with his misery. "We men can stand it uncomplainingly for ourselves, but to think of this poor girl and of this tender baby—"

The thought was too terrible to pursue. Breaking off abruptly, the old East-Indian leaped to his feet and began pacing to and fro on the shore.

Hovering over his son, Will. asked if he shouldn't take charge of him. Miss Dail declined the offer, saying that the child was much warmer where it was than it could be with him, and that it could not be moved without awaking it—an event it was desirable to adjourn until the latest possible moment.

Removing his coat, Will. wrapped it around Miss Dail and the baby, and joined his uncle's sad walk along the shore. The cold soon compelled Jude to a like movement, and thus the three men walked up and down, exchanging now and then a few words.

The darkness increased as the night advanced, and the wind grew stronger and colder with every passing instant, penetrating to the very bones of the little band so infamously exposed to its power.

Tired of walking, the three men at last came back to Miss Dail, grouping themselves close around her, and endeavoring to protect one another with the warmth of their bodies.

"This is horrible," sighed Will., his teeth chattering. "We are too cold to talk."

"Hark!" breathed Mr. Aymar suddenly.

The little group listened.

Not a sound was heard save the murmurs of the elements around them.

"I thought I heard the splash of an oar," exclaimed Mr. Aymar.

"An oar?" repeated Miss Dail and Will. and Jude in chorus.

"It may have been a mere fancy."

With what anxious expectancy they listened!

"There it is again," breathed Mr. Aymar.

"There's no mistake about it," confirmed Will.

"A boat is certainly coming," affirmed Miss Dail. "There's the splashing of oars."

These sounds were repeated again and again, becoming stronger as the little group listened further, and it was soon possible to follow the movements of the approaching boat by the hearing. It neared the island very slowly and very cautiously, coming from the direction of Christmas Harbor.

"It's Pedder coming to kill us," murmured Mr. Aymar. "He has changed his mind. Or it may be the pirates. After getting the money, they might conclude to put us out of the way forever."

"It would be better to die at once than die by inches," returned Will. "Let them come."

The boat reached the shore near the spot Will. and his friends had been in the habit of using as a landing-place. A man leaped ashore, and drew the boat half out of the water. Then the man came in the direction of the site of the late boat dwelling.

But at the end of a few rods he came to a halt, looking excitedly around and seeming to be at fault as to his whereabouts.

"Are you here, Hawley?" he shouted.

Will. uttered a cry of recognition.

"It's Dougal!" he cried, bounding forward. "This way, Dougal! Here we all are. Oh, thank God! thank God!"

The new-comer was indeed Capt. Dougal.

"What has happened here?" he asked, after greetings were exchanged.

Will. made a brief statement—not so much of what had taken place, as of the necessities of the moment.

"Thank Heaven! I come just in time," exclaimed Dougal. "My mission to Australia has been a success. I've a beautiful ship anchored inside of Cape Français. And as I thought you might be in great straits, I have brought food, drink and blankets—everything you need. Come down to the boat, and make yourselves comfortable, while I tell you what is in the wind."

The proposed dispositions were soon made, and Dougal then resumed:

"Not far from our ship is anchored the *Thunderer*, and around these two are anchored four large men of war. They are here to destroy the Malay Gunner, who has slipped into Christmas Harbor during the past afternoon. You must have seen him?"

"Yes, we did."

"Well, he has got to the end of his long cruise. He and his men will be attacked by five ships and six or seven hundred men, with the first gleams of day. Several boats are on the look-out in the harbor, and every point of a great rejoicing in which the pirates are engaged is being noticed. The wretches will be exterminated to a man before sunrise."

A fresh splashing of oars was here heard in the direction Dougal had come, and another boat soon drew near the island.

"Who's there?" called Dougal, when the outlines of the boat and several occupants began to reveal themselves indistinctly to his sight.

"A friend," was the answer. "Is Miss Dail with you?"

Miss Dail fairly screamed with joy, as she leaped to her feet, and handed the baby to Hawley.

"It's Mr. Wilber—my betrothed husband," she cried. "He has made his escape!"

The boat touched the shore, and the lovers sprang into each other's arms.

"How did you escape, dear, from Pedder?" resumed Miss Dail, laughing and crying in a breath.

"Pedder is dead, and so is his sister," announced Wilber. "On hearing how Pedder had treated Bantam, the Gunner resolved to send Pedder ashore to die there. Pedder asked to see his sister, and a few words passed between the couple—when Pedder shot his sister and then himself, both dying instantly. Learning these facts, I sought an interview with the Gunner, and asked permission to come for you. He consented; such was his pleasure, it seems, in undoing all Pedder had done; and then I asked—"

"But where is Mrs. Hawley all this time?" interrupted Miss Dail wildly.

"She isn't far off," replied Wilber, as a warmly muffled figure arose in the boat behind him. "Here she is, and her nurse with her."

The glorious scene that followed can be safely left to the reader's imagination. It was one of those divine compensations which attest that there is a just GOD in heaven who rules the destiny of men.

We need not linger upon the fight with the pirates which succeeded with the dawn of a new day. It is enough to say that they were exterminated to the last man, as Dougal had prophesied. The schooner of the Gunner was captured nearly uninjured, and so was the yacht, of which Hawley and Mr. Aymar were placed in instant possession, as well as of the two vast fortunes of Mr. Aymar, which were found intact in the state-room where Pedder had stored them. And the very same day the whole party started for New York, where they settled themselves to their perfect satisfaction. Jude remained with Hawley, a devoted friend and servant, and still remains the major-domo of Hawley's splendid estate on the Hudson. Both Capt. Graham and Mr. Sterling of the *Petrel* occasionally visit the Hawleys and Mr. Aymar, they having been picked up, with their companions, after a trying experience in their boats. The success and happiness of which our friends were all deserving have duly reached them, and naught remains of all the darkness and sufferings of the days of THE PLOT AGAINST HAWLEY.

THE END.

[The great fires of the North-west, culminating in the dread tragedy of Chicago, have made a deep and lasting impression upon the souls of men, as well as upon the pages of history. But the mystery of those fires has not yet been fully cleared up—their numbers not fully accounted for. A thousand questions continue to arise. Were all those fires in the forests of the North-west purely accidental? Or were they the work of organized incendiaries? Was Chicago burnt purposely? Had any one anything to gain by that work of destruction? In a word, did there exist at the time of Chicago's destruction, and before, a gang of ruffians who made a trade of incendiarism? However these questions may be answered, there can be no question in the minds of our readers as to the extraordinary interest of Mr. LEWIS's new story. It is entitled,

THE FIRE SPREADERS;

OR,

THE BURNERS OF CHICAGO.

It will be begun in the next number of the *Ledger*, and we believe it to be the most stirring narrative that the current events of our times have yet furnished our popular contributor.]

A POSTMASTER'S PLEA.

We trust, whatever may be the mutations in office in the time to come, that one man especially may be spared from the stroke of the besom. He is now an old man, and has been for years postmaster of a small town of New Hampshire, close under the shadow of old Chocorua. When Lincoln had been elected, and a sweep was being made in the various departments, our New Hampshire veteran addressed the Postmaster-general in a letter as follows:

"MY DEAR GENERAL,—The sound of the coming storm has reached my ears. On every hand I hear the wail going up. Strong men are bowed down, and young men and maidens are weeping. The fat places of honor and emolument which yesterday were, to-day are not. Faces that have heretofore shined are now in a cloud, and forms that had bloated with plenty are in this present shrinking with fear of want. Alas! how have the mighty fallen! The stone from the sling of David hath smitten Goliah to the death. Once I trembled for my country, but now I tremble for myself. Your terrible besom of cleansing seems to be reaching this way. Dear General, spare me. I have a wife and eleven small children, and ten of them are girls. Do not snatch from me my office. It yields me now four dollars and sixty cents per annum—all the ready money I see in this section,—and with this I am enabled to keep my wife in hair-pins, and find sugar-plums for the girls, and also to purchase a Thanksgiving goose, over which I will not fail to offer up an earnest prayer for your welfare and prosperity. In conclusion suffer me to cast myself upon your clemency.

"Ever faithfully yours, ———, P. M."

Surely that man should be suffered to stick; and yet we doubt not that he is envied his official position. C.

THE TOWN CLOCK.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

The clock in the old church tower,
  One face looks over the town,
The other over the willows green
  On the turnpike bare and brown.

At the big black hands I gaze,
  As I stitch away at my hem;
When one points up and the other down,
  I kiss my fingers to them.

For somebody out on the road
  Looks up at the clock, I know,
And the long hands seem to beckon him on,
  In the way that he fain would go.

And I love the old town clock,
  In the tower so gray and grim;
Its one face giving a promise to me,
  The other a welcome to him.

NOEL'S MISTAKE.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

"Tell me the name of the lady who was your last partner," Noel Stratton said to his friend Nat. Hughes, as the two sauntered from the crowded ball-room to the cool piazza.

"Is it possible that you have been three weeks at Newport, and do not know Honoria Leigh?" cried his companion.

"Honoria Leigh! I have heard of her."

"Heard of her! I should think so. There is not a belle here who can compare with her. That odd, statuesque beauty is rare. Did you notice? not all the dancing or the heat of that crowded room could bring the faintest flush to her cheek. She is always pale and quiet; but there is not a rosy-cheeked laughing damsel here who breaks more hearts than Honoria Leigh, with her stately figure and impassive face. Her eyes are wonderful. When she talks, they absorb all the animation of her face, for she never grimaces nor gesticulates as many do."

"Will you introduce me, Nat.? Not to-night," he added hastily, as his friend turned toward the ball-room; "to-morrow. I do not care to return to the ball again. To-morrow morning, if there is an opportunity, will you present me to the lady?"

"Willingly. Guard your heart."

"She is a flirt then?"

"No. That is the queerest part of it. She seems absolutely indifferent to admiration or attention, resorts to no artifice to gain either the one or the other, and gives no man the right to feel that he is honored above all others; yet this very cool contempt of their pretensions seems to stimulate the male portion of society here till they are fairly piqued into devoted attentions."

"The handsome man who hovers near her so much — Graham, I think I have heard him called—is he not the favored one?"

"Mark Graham! Why, he is her uncle."

Noel Stratton crushed the delicate kid glove he held in his hand into a shapeless ball, as he said, in a hoarse, low tone:

"Her uncle! Mark Graham Honoria's uncle!"

"Why, Noel, what ails you? Man alive, are you going to faint?"

"No, no. It is nothing; a passing spasm. Do not mind me."

But even as he spoke the strong man reeled across the porch to a bench and sank down, as if struck by a sudden blow.

"I will tell you, Nat.," he said, after a moment of silence, "in a moment."

"Tell me what?" asked his wondering friend. "You are ill, Noel?"

"No; I am not ill. It is deserted here, Nat. Too early yet for promenaders. Sit down and I will tell you what makes your words a revelation to me. You remember five years ago, when I spent a winter in Washington in the capacity of escort in chief to Aunt Edith?"

"The aunt who left you her fortune?"

"The same, though death seemed far enough from her then. She was one of the most devoted votaries to fashion, and our winter was a constant round of receptions, balls, and gayeties of all sorts. One of Aunt Edith's especial pets was Honoria Leigh. You would scarcely think, Nat., looking at her to-night, that in those days she was one of the most animated and brilliant of Washington belles. Her father, at that time, was in Congress, and his daughter was an acknowledged belle. You speak of her pallor and coldness. Five years ago her cheeks were round and blooming as a child's; the icy manner you mention did not exist then, but every word and movement were full of animation. She was wonderfully beautiful, but society gave her that most hateful of all names for a woman to bear—that of a flirt. I met her, forewarned that she made playthings of hearts, and won love only to throw it aside. But, as I said, Aunt Edith made her a special favorite, and in the privacy of our own home circle I found her so frank, noble and winning, that gradually I forgot the reputation she bore, and believed her the pure, true woman she always seemed. Have you ever heard her sing?"

"She never sings."

"In those days she sang. In society, her voice, cultivated and powerful, was applauded as one of the finest ever heard in an amateur performer. But for us, Aunt Edith and me, she would sing soul music, wonderful German melodies full of pathos and sweetness, quaint old ballads of the past, and soft sweet home tunes, that seemed like echoes of childhood. In society men applauded her brilliant conversational powers, her wit, her reading and her almost masculine grasp of intellect. For us she had sweet, low-toned home talk; would tell us of her aunt's country home among the mountains of Vermont, of the little children who loved her, and who were dear to her. Had I only met her abroad, I should have admired her and passed on; but meeting her true self, as I believed, in our home circle, seeing her womanliness, her gentleness and sweetness, I loved her with every throb of my heart."

He paused a moment, overcome by his own emotion; but rallying, spoke still in the low constrained voice he had been using:

"Honoria's father had a suit of rooms at the Kirkwood House, and I was always a welcome guest in their private sitting-room. Mr. Leigh was usually crowded with engagements, but his sister was with Honoria; and when they had a quiet home evening I was often with the ladies. I am spinning out my story, Nat., till you will grow weary."

"No; tell me more."

"I found an opportunity to tell my love, even in the whirl of Washington gayety, and was accepted by Honoria. She frankly told me her love, laughingly promising to abandon all flirtations, past, present and future, for my sake. For one month I was absolutely and supremely happy. I loved Honoria, and I trusted her. I was her escort everywhere, and our engagement was one of the topics for the comments of society. Yet, in the very midst of my happiness, I was often grieved by the weight Honoria gave to the attentions of other men. She delighted in knowing she was so beautiful, so bewitching, and she could not entirely control the spirit of coquetry that seemed the only fault in her disposition. She seemed to love me, yet she would torment me sometimes in a very spirit of mischief, by accepting attention I did not like, ever making peace by pretty penitence and loving concessions afterward. Our engagement was but one month old, and I was hoping soon to have a day appointed for the wedding, when one evening I called upon Honoria to escort her to a Presidential reception. As I crossed the hall leading to the door of the private sitting-room, I saw just ahead of me a gentleman, about my own age, evidently just arrived from a long journey. Nothing strange in that, you will say, in the corridor of a large hotel, but the colored waiter who preceded this gentleman, knocked at the door of Honoria's private sitting-room, and answering a voice from inside, opened it, saying:

"'Mr. Graham, Miss Leigh.'

"In a moment my Honoria, with a glad cry, was folded in the embrace of the stranger, who kissed her fondly, and called her by affectionate names. The door closed, and I was shut out. I rushed home, wrote an angry, reproachful letter to Honoria, bade Aunt Edith farewell, and started for New York by the midnight train. The following Saturday I sailed for Europe, only returning a month ago. I have never seen or heard from Honoria since, until I came to Newport to find the man I supposed my successful rival hovering always about her. Day after day I have resolved to speak to her, and reproach her for my wasted life, and now you tell me my wretched jealousy has led me into an absurd error."

"Mr. Graham is certainly the brother of Miss Leigh's mother," said Nat. gravely.

"You know the family?"

"Assuredly. My mother was one of Mrs. Leigh's most intimate friends, and after her death she always kept up a warm friendship with Honoria and her Aunt Louise. Your story partly explains the dangerous illness which changed Honoria from the bright girl you describe, to the cold, impassive woman she is now."

"Illness! Was she ill?"

"We all supposed at the time it was Mr. Leigh's political troubles."

"Political troubles! I never heard of them. I thought he was one of our most distinguished and honored statesmen."

"You are right, for he rose above the temporary cloud that at one time seemed to threaten his whole patriotic career. This is not the time nor place to enter into an explanation that would take hours of discussion, but just about the time you sailed for Europe, Mr. Leigh was supposed to be involved in a disgraceful complication, which he afterward proved to have been an error. Indeed, he so completely exonerated himself, that he stood higher than ever when the mistake was proven. But the temporary trouble was supposed to account for his daughter's illness. You must have known how she loved and honored him?"

"I know that well. Doubtless she thought I had deserted her in her hour of sorrow and humiliation."

"After she began to recover, she spent a year in Vermont, and returned to Washington the following winter. My own acquaintance with her began at that time, but I have heard my mother speak of the great change her illness caused in her looks and manner."

"She can never forgive me!" Noel said sadly. "Do not let me keep you from the ball-room, Nat. I will sit here a while, and then return to my own room. I am not fit for dancing and flirting to-night."

The bench upon which Noel Stratton was seated when his friend left him, was hidden from any promenaders upon the balcony by a heavy pillar covered with vines, and still further concealed by the darkness of the evening.

He had been there a long time, with no companion but his own sad, remorseful thoughts, when the rustling sweep of silken garments roused him from painful reverie, and looking up, he saw indistinctly the figures of two ladies. While he was wondering if he could escape unseen, the voice of one of the newcomers, sweet, low and familiar, held him motionless.

"You see, Aunt Louise," the voice said sadly, "he avoids me still, and I can never tell him his error. Each day I resolve to write and explain to him my innocence, but my pride steps in, and keeps me silent."

"Let me tell him, Honoria. Yet I agree with you that it is humiliating to explain an error that could never have occurred had not Noel Stratton been of a suspicious, jealous nature."

"It could never have occurred if I had not so often given him cause for jealousy. I thought it added to his love, to let him see that others admired and courted me, never dreaming he could fancy me utterly false."

"He could never have loved you truly, dear, or he could not see you now, so changed, in cold, reserved silence. The very fact that you are still unmarried should have convinced him of your faithful affection. Forget him, Honoria. The past three weeks have convinced me that he is unworthy of you."

"It may be so," was the sad answer.

"You are cold. How you tremble!"

"No, I am not cold."

"Wait here, and I will get you a shawl."

Alone, Honoria Leigh leaning wearily against a pillar, trying to peer out into the darkness that wrapped all around her, was startled by a low, deep voice, calling her name.

"Honoria, it is Noel Stratton who speaks," the voice continued, "Noel Stratton, who only an hour ago learned how deeply he wronged you. Will you speak one word to show him how he may win your forgiveness?"

One word broke in a sob from her lips:

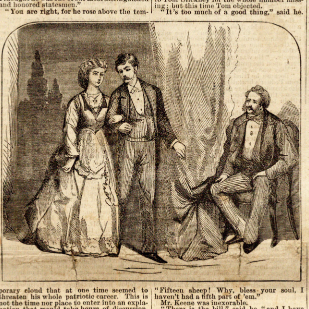
"Noel."

He was by her side in an instant, telling her in broken accents of his penitence, of the sorrow and weariness of the five long years of separation, pleading for pardon as only a man can plead when his life's happiness is at stake. And Honoria, listening with new hope in her heart, had her story too to relate, and her tale of contrition for the past to plead.

Nat. Hughes opened his eyes very wide, and gave a significant little grunt of wondering approval, when the curtains of one of the porch windows suddenly parted, and Noel Stratton stepped over the sill with Honoria Leigh leaning upon his arm. To the others collected in the crowded ball-room, there was nothing unusual in the appearance of two of their circle promenading slowly, and joining in the waltz following their appearance, but Nat. smiled as he marked the happy light in his friend's eyes, the proud carriage of his head, and saw upon Honoria's fair cheek the faintest flush of gladness, and in her great dark eyes the smile they had not worn for five long years.

* * *

—The greatest difficulties are always found where we are not looking for them.



TOO MUCH CREDIT.

Mr. Keene, a shrewd and thrifty farmer of Allenborough, owned a large flock of sheep, and one autumn, when it came housing time, he was greatly annoyed upon missing a number of his finest muttons, among them three or four weathers which he had raised and fattened for his own table. He was sure it was not the work of dogs, and the most he could do was to await further developments.

On the following spring, when his sheep were turned out to pasture, he instituted a careful watch, and ere long he detected Tom Stickney, a neighboring farmer, in the act of pilfering a sheep; but he made no noise about it at the time. Stickney was a man well to do, and Keene did not care to expose him.

Autumn came again, and upon counting up his flock Mr. Keene found eight sheep missing. He made out a bill in due form to Thomas Stickney for the eight sheep, and presented it. Stickney choked and stammered, but did not back down. Like a prudent man he paid the bill and pocketed the receipt.

Another spring-time came, and Mr. Keene's sheep were again turned out. Another autumn came, and the farmer again took an account of his stock, and this time fifteen sheep were missing. As before he made out the bill to Tom Stickney for the whole number missing; but this time Tom objected.

"It's too much of a good thing," said he. "Fifteen sheep! Why, bless your soul, I haven't had a fifth part of 'em."

Mr. Keene was inexorable.

"There is the bill," said he, "and I have made it out in good faith. I have made no fuss when my sheep have been missing because I deemed your credit good and sufficient."

"Well," groaned Tom, with a big gulp, "I suppose I must pay; but," he added emphatically, "we'll close that account from this time. You have given me too much credit altogether,—*some other rascal has been stealing on the strength of it!*"

C.

* * *

SCIENCE.

From the annual report of the New York State Museum of Natural History we learn that Mr. Verplank Colvin, who accurately measured the altitude of Mount Seward, one of the higher peaks of the Adirondack mountains, found its summit to be 4,462 feet above the level of the sea. Mount Marcy, the loftiest peak in the State, rises to 5,467 feet—more than one thousand feet higher. Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, one hundred and fifty miles distant, could be seen from the summit. Mr. Colvin fears that the rapid destruction of the Adirondack forests is causing a sensible decrease in the water supply of the region, which will ultimately render it impossible to navigate the Hudson more than half as far as at present.

The French minister of agriculture is making the most determined efforts to arrest the vine disease which has assumed such formidable proportions in France. An accomplished chemist has been sent into the country to make it his exclusive study, and each day he spends several hours lying on the ground close to the affected plants, and watches the minute insect called the *Phylloxera vastatrix*, which makes such havoc among them. He finds that "they take a constitutional walk at noon and retire at sunset. The only way to protect a vine is to lay bare the roots of the plant so as to make a circular basin, and to keep this filled with water for several days."

A remarkable aurora was visible in New York and vicinity on the night of the 14th of October. It was first noticeable at about half-past six o'clock in the evening in the form of a beautiful cloud of crimson light extending over a considerable portion of the northern sky, and reaching nearly to the zenith. Many persons mistook it for the reflection of a large fire somewhere in the city. Notwithstanding that the night was clear and the moon nearly at the full, a fine auroral arch was visible in the north at eleven o'clock, with several well-defined and extensive patches of the same rosy light seen earlier in the evening.

Aseptin is the name of a meat-preservative mixture used in Sweden. It consists of boracic acid and alum in equal parts. A writer in the *Polytechnisches Journal* of Dr. Dingler says that two pounds of milk, which under ordinary circumstances would become sour in thirty-six hours, can be kept sweet for one hundred and twenty hours, by the addition of fifteen grains of boracic acid. He adds that this acid improves beer, even in the warmest weather.

It is a noteworthy fact that notwithstanding the number of lions and tigers annually killed by British sportsmen, there is no skeleton of a wild lion or a wild tiger in either the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, or the Oxford University Museum. The anatomical preparations which these institutions possess are derived from menagerie specimens, in which the bony framework lacks full development.

A new blasting powder called pudrolithe is announced from Belgium. Its ingredients are spent tan and wood sawdust, nitrate of soda, nitrate of baryta, charcoal, saltpetre and sulphur. The inventor claims for it an unusual degree of safety, asserting that it can be manufactured and stored without danger, and unless compressed will burn without explosion.

An able paper on the Scintillation of the Stars was read by M. Respighi, the distinguished astronomer, at the recent meeting of the French Association for the Promotion of Science, held at Bordeaux, in which the author shows that the rotation of the earth on its axis is one of the principal elements in causing the twinkling of the stars.

Charles F. Chandler and William H. Chandler, professors of chemistry at the Columbia College School of Mines and Lehigh University, Pa., respectively, have lately been chosen fellows of the Chemical Society of London, a distinction rarely conferred, we believe, on American chemists.

The phosphorescence of the glow-worm and all other phosphorescent animals is ascribed by Dr. T. L. Phipson, a devoted student of the subject, to an organic substance which he calls noctilucene. He believes that this is also the cause of the phosphorescent light of sea-water.

Glycerine, says the *Athenæum*, may be used with great advantage in the preparation of leather, not in the process of tanning, but as a bath after the tanning is completed. Leather thus treated acquires a peculiar softness especially desirable in machine belts.

The *Journal of Applied Chemistry* recommends sulphite or bi-sulphite of lime to prevent the fermentation of cider. It imparts no taste to the liquor, and leaves an insoluble precipitate of sulphate of lime, from which the contents of the barrel may be drawn off.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Emigrant (Williamsburg) writes: "This being a wet day, and not having any work to do inside, I have picked up the *Ledger* to read the correspondents' columns, as I am pleased with your answers to questions. Now, for the first time in my life, the thought comes into my head of stating my case to you. I am a married man, and have my wife and five children to support on the small sum of one dollar and seventy-five cents per day, and sometimes I get two dollars. In fact, I have to eat it as fast as I get it, which leaves me short in the winter. I served as a soldier during the war, and am entitled to one hundred and sixty acres of land. Now, is it best for me to emigrate to that land? and how can I get there, not having five dollars in the world to spare? I am told that there is plenty of work out there, if a man is willing. I am always at work when I can get it. Do you suppose it would make me look ridiculous in the eyes of people if I were to ask help from some of the monied citizens of Brooklyn and New York? I should not like to have my name published in the papers as a beggar. I have applied to the Children's Aid Society, but can get no satisfactory answer from the agent. The only information I can get from them is that they will do well by me; but I prefer to do well by myself, if I can. I would try it this winter, if I could be sure of something to keep my family from starvation until I could get the first year's harvest in. I speak to plenty of men who would go, if they could see their road clear. I have thought of applying to A. T. Stewart, and others; but I am told that Mr. Stewart is a very close man, and that I would be the laughing-stock for the papers. If you please, answer this, and give me your views on the subject." An honest laboring man—especially one who has fought for his country—we always consider entitled to our interest and sympathy. Your apprehensions about getting into the papers and being laughed at are entirely unfounded. No paper would take the trouble to notice such a thing, and people are too busy to stop to laugh at such a matter. At the same time, it is hardly likely that any perfect stranger will assist you. In the manner in which you speak of Mr. Stewart you probably do him an injustice. It is only by close management that such a business as his can be made successful. But to be close is not necessarily to be mean. If Mr. Stewart were to give attention to every such application, it would consume all his time, if it did not also all his money. It would be the same with other rich men. It seems to us that the best chance for you is to let yourself for a year to some one at the West, who would pay your fare out there, and wages after your arrival. We suppose a steady, industrious man would be able to make some such arrangement.

Minister (Clyde, Ohio) says: "Being a constant reader of your valuable paper, I take this opportunity of seeking you for advice upon a question of great importance to me. It is this: About four years ago I went to school for the purpose of studying for the ministry, but my studies were very hard and I became discouraged, and after going to school two terms, gave it up and came home, thinking I had mistaken my duty. I finally got married; but since then the duty has been coming up *so strong that I must preach.* Now I have no means to go away to school, and I don't know what to do. Can I preach and be a useful man with only a common education? Please advise me, as your advice is always so good to those in trouble." There are several most respectable and useful churches in the country that do not demand a high education, and in whose ministry many men without much scholarship have done great good, because they knew their Bibles and were in earnest in their work. Put yourself in communication with some of these, through local ministers, and state your case. You will get an opportunity of exercising your gifts; and if you secure a respectful hearing from the Christian people, you and they will be able to judge the better of your duty. A strong desire, *by itself*, does not prove either call or capacity for the ministry, or any other high calling.

A Constant Reader (Dalton, Geo.) says: "I have been a constant reader of your valuable paper for several years, and, like many others, come to you for advice. I have a rich uncle, who has promised to leave me his property, provided I obey him while he lives. The trouble is, I am engaged to a young lady to whom he objects on account of her poverty, and threatens to disinherit me if I marry her. Now the question is, should I discard her and be miserable, or marry her and take the consequences? We are both poor, but able to work. Please advise me on this question, and oblige." The best of books directs that a man shall leave father and mother and cleave to his wife. If this marriage be in all other respects a proper one, we should think much more should you leave your uncle, even though he is rich. He may relent, and make you his heir after all; and if you remained single, or married a wife of his choice, she might offend him afterward; or possibly he may find a wife for himself yet. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," particularly such a high and distant bush as a rich uncle in vigorous health.

Inquisitive (St. Louis, Mo.) says: "Please devote a few lines of your space to answering the following questions: Has there ever been a work published giving descriptions of the machines contrived for navigating the air? If so, please give me the title, and also the publisher's names. If not, where would be the proper place to apply for such information as a person contemplating studying the matter would need? Please suggest some good work explanatory of the different currents of our atmosphere, and greatly oblige." We give you a list of works, but most of them being European, we cannot give you publishers' names: Borelli's *De Motu Animalium*; Cyrano's comical *History of the States and Kingdoms in the Sun and Moon*; Francis Lana's *Prodromo dell' Arte Maestra* (Italian); Lord Bacon's *Natural History*; Professor Leslie's *Treatise on Heat*; and on the general subject, the publications of the *Aerostatic Institute* in the Polytechnic School, Paris. The balloon ascents of Mongolfier, M. Biot, M. Gay-Lussac, and Blanchard, are described in popular books.

C. E. B. says: "I have fallen in love with one of the most pure-minded persons that ever graced this earth, but she is far above me in earth's riches. Her parents are against me. I am doing well in business, and as far as I know bear a good name. Life is worth nothing without her. Now the question is, what would you advise me to do in the case?—get married unknown to them, or wait?" You had better wait a while, and try to obtain her parents' approval of the match. If she is what you believe her, there is no danger of change on her part; and if she does change, it will show that you would not have got what you imagined by marrying her. So you may rest content. Her father may fail. Men once rich often do. Then he might be willing you should have his daughter, as he would be sure it was her person and not her prospects that you were in love with. Remember how many a married man you have heard say that his days of courtship were the happiest of his life, and make the most of yours.

Jessie (Albany, Geo.) says: "Please answer the following questions in your next issue, among your Notices to Correspondents: namely, 1. Is the term *politics* a singular or plural noun? 2. If Mrs. Brown and Miss Smith are in copartnership as a firm, what would be the title of the firm, or how should they be addressed? 3. When and where were the first Irish potatoes found?" 1. Sciences ending in *ics* are now generally regarded as singular, and "politics" comes under this rule. 2. Mrs. Brown & Co., or Brown & Smith, or as you write it, though it would be a little clumsy. Better let Miss Smith get married, and write up Mesdames Brown & Smith. 3. Irish potatoes were brought from America to Great Britain and Ireland; and probably first grew in the south of the island, the story being that Sir Walter's gardener at Youghal tried the apples and was disgusted, not knowing the tubers to be the real esculent.

I. Holstein (Galveston, Texas) says: "Please answer through the *Ledger* the following: Is the sight of a child with sound organs as strong as the sight, also sound, of a grown person? Can, for instance, a child, say of two years, elevated to the altitude of a grown person, see with naked eye an object at a certain distance with the same clearness, without more exertion of the nerves, than the adult? Will your answer apply also to the sense of hearing under the same circumstances?" We have never had occasion to examine this question, and an oculist would be the only expert on such a topic. We should suppose, however, that the eye and ear have at an early age as much nerve power as in after life; but they lack that *education* which plays an important part in the use of all the senses.

School-girl (Jersey City) says: "I find, by reading the *Universal Path-finder*, that needles were first invented in 1545. I would like to know what the people used for needles, or how they made clothes, before needles were invented. Knowing that you are willing to give desired information, I write to you, hoping soon to receive an answer through your valuable *Ledger*." We presume the *Universal Path-finder* refers to some particular kind of needle. Steel is now employed, but bone, ivory and wood have also been used, and are still employed. Weaving has been an early and common way of making garments.

Sara Amanda says: "I am about to ask you a few questions which I hope you will not refuse to answer. Suppose that after a child has been christened, the parents become dissatisfied with a part of its name, would it be right or proper to change it? Ought a child's name to be changed or added to after it has been christened?" In orderly churches, a registry is kept of baptisms, and it is not desirable to change the name registered there. Litigation has often been affected by reference to the baptismal record, and identification is sometimes made difficult by capricious changes.

P. S. I. (Reynoldsville, Pa.) says: "Would you be kind enough to inform me through your columns if Spurgeon's sermons are published in a form somewhat like those of Beecher's, and if so, where can they be obtained?" They are issued in volumes, and also in single copies, and any bookseller can obtain them in both forms, from New York; or you can write to any of the houses that sell religious works, such as Dodd & Mead, A. D. F. Randolph & Co., Broadway, for them.

Harlem says: "Does the fact of a person being born in the United States entitle him to the rights of citizenship, supposing his father to be a foreigner who had never been naturalized? Please answer through the columns of your valuable paper, and decide a much agitated question in this neighborhood." So we have always understood it, unless the father took steps to keep himself and family subjects of a foreign power.

A Reader (Alexandria, Va.) says: "Will you please inform me if there is a plural to the word sash, as applied to windows, or not?" Why not? Webster defines the verb "sash," "to make sashes," and we should like to see the man, north or south, who will impugn him. No word is more common than sashes.

Inquirer (Sacramento, Cal.) says: "Will you please tell me, in your usual way of answering questions, the correct way, both in America and in England, to pronounce the word *been*—I have *been* somewhere? By so doing, you will oblige me." It is pronounced as if written with *i* short—to rhyme with "sin."

K. C. sends us a question on which he says he has a wager of considerable amount. We neither make bets nor decide them. Our opinion is that it would be better if all betters would stop betting.

Mortimer says: "I want your advice, if you please. I am a clerk in a store, with $1,800 salary. When I was married I was worth considerable money, and had a paying business. A year ago I lost it all, and was glad to take up with a salaried office. We were then keeping house in Boston, where I lived to gratify my wife. Now she is so much taken up with city life—being a country-bred girl—that she refuses to live with me, and board as I have to do, in a distant city, preferring, for the sake of living in Boston, to board alone, and give singing lessons. In this her father advises her and furnishes her money to board there, being persuaded that she is going to make a great success. He would not give her the same money, if she came and lived with me here. Now is not this wrong? Has he any right to encourage her to live away from her husband, for the sake of gratifying her foolish ideas of keeping up the appearance of living in the fashionable world? Moreover, her parents are keeping our only child away from us, in their charge, and refuse to accede to my request to have both wife and child live with me. What can I do? I love them both, and it is very hard to be separated." We think your wife is doing a wrong and foolish thing, and her parents—unless there is something more than your letter mentions—make a mistake in their course. We presume the law would give you both wife and child, unless cause were shown; but you must try persuasion and hope the best. Crime often arises from ambitious folly.

Ethel (New York) says: "Would you be so kind as to answer the following questions in your column for correspondents? 1. What does it signify when the corners of visiting cards are turned down, and also when the cards are folded through the centre? 2. Is the meaning different if more than one is turned down, and is there a different meaning for each corner? 3. Is it proper for a gentleman, when calling upon a lady, to send up his card with the corner turned down? By answering these you will settle a dispute, and confer a favor." The laws of visiting cards—we do not profess to know any other—are arbitrary and unfixed; but in New York—1. a card turned down at the corner means that it was left by the person whose name it bears, instead of being sent. We never saw any folded through the centre, and think it an accident. 2. We have not seen more than one corner turned down, and you may please yourself as to the corner. 3. When a gentleman sends up his card, he does not turn down the corner, because sending it up implies his being there himself, if the lady please to see him. Cards are turned down when the person visited is not at home.

Minnie M. (Quincy, Ill.) says: "I have long contemplated writing to you, but never have done so for fear you would throw my letter in your waste basket. I am now sixteen years of age; have been engaged for the past two years to an excellent young man nineteen years of age. Our parents both being dead, I am now residing with my uncle, who opposes our marriage without any reason. I have six thousand dollars in my uncle's hands, left me by my father, to be given to me when I am married, my uncle having the use of it as long as I remain with him. Now please advise me what to do, and oblige a constant reader of your valuable paper." We deliberately advise you to remain with your uncle for the next two years at least, to be a good girl to him, and all others, and if the union then appears to you desirable, write the *Ledger* again for advice. Your uncle would require to have guardians appointed to your husband and you if you married now, the gentleman being still an infant in the eye of the law.

J. J. H. (Newport, Ky.) says: "I was engaged to a young lady, but the engagement was broken by her. She afterward wrote to me, requesting me to correspond with her, to which I acquiesced, and we have continued to do so ever since—about eighteen months. I am now so situated that I will be unable to marry for the next three years. I wrote her to that effect, and asked her if she would wait. She answered that she would, if she did not meet with any one she liked better in the mean time. Do you think that is a satisfactory answer? I hardly do." We think it an eminently prudent, and even philosophical answer. It proves that the young lady is not dazzled by your brilliant merits, nor blinded by passion, but carries her head level, and has a cool and dispassionate judgment. She should have some old gentleman and his affairs to manage, who, after making her his wife, might be expected by her to confer one more favor, and make her his widow.

Granite State says: "Will you please inform me through the *Ledger* where, in the West, I may find a dry and mild climate, which my health demands, where I may find employment in some store, whereby I may earn my living and save a little for future emergencies. Would three or four hundred dollars be of much benefit to me there, in any kind of business? I would like to go to some small city where I could find employment in some store, and by close attention to business be able to invest my earnings and small capital in the business. Please answer as soon as possible and confer a favor." Minnesota is dry, but cold in winter. Texas is dry and mild most of the year. So are most of the cities in California, outside San Francisco. A medical man should decide for you in view of your health. You would have little difficulty in finding a business opening for yourself and your capital in almost any State or Territory.

Wife (Lafayette) says: "I have been married several years, and have thus far lived happily; only my mother and I think that my husband don't take me out visiting enough. He stays in his store all day, and when he comes home at night, he wants to stay there, instead of going out calling with me. He is willing I should go whenever I please. What shall I do to cure him of his whim?" We pity your husband. A gadding wife must be a sufficient trial, and when there is added to it a meddlesome mother-in-law, his situation must be deplorable. We do not wonder that he is always willing to have you go. We should think he would be glad. You seem to look upon your husband as if he were intended for a sort of post-chaise. You forget that his object in marrying was to have a home of his own, and seem to think it ought to have been to escort his wife to the houses of other people.

Frank C. (Boston) says: "I am a boy of seventeen years of age, and am desirous of obtaining a classical education. My parents are opposed to my going to college, on the ground that it is all foolishness for me to aspire to anything higher in the world than the position of a respectable tradesman. But I am ambitious of becoming a lawyer, and I think I have ability enough to make a successful one. What would you advise me to do?" If you can work your way through college, it will be a good thing for you, even if you should finally conclude to be a mechanic or a tradesman. The highest prizes which the world now has to bestow are more easily won by intelligent and educated mechanics and tradesmen, who have the talent to become monarchs in their respective avocations, than by lawyers, or any other professional men.

P. W. W. D. (Vicksburg, Miss.) says: "Will you please be so kind as to advise me through the columns of your valuable paper whether 'William Tell' is a fictitious or historical person? I am aware that such a person is mentioned in ancient history in connection with the delivery of Switzerland, but having seen in the last edition of Rudolph Laxow's German paper a denial that such a person ever existed, I take the liberty of asking your opinion on the subject." The historical character of William Tell has been questioned, but not, so far as we have seen, disproved; and until the disproof is overwhelming, we mean to believe in him fully, more particularly in the story of Gessler and the apple.

M. G. E. (Chicago) writes: "I am a young girl of nineteen. I commenced to go with a gentleman some two years ago, and he professed to love me. He left the city a few months ago, and promised to write; but I have received no letter from him, and besides, I have learned that he is engaged to another lady. Do you think he would give me his picture, and say he would come and see me when he came back to the city, if he was engaged to another? I know the not writing is against him, but I cannot believe the rest of the story." It is hard to lose confidence in one who has been trusted; but you would believe against reason and evidence if you were not convinced by his long silence, of the faithlessness of your unworthy suitor.

W. (Michigan) writes: "I wish to ask your advice in a little matter of mine, and as you oblige other readers, I hope you will do the same with me. I love a young lady with all my heart, and she says she loves me. Although I am only in my eighteenth year, and she only sixteen, she promised to be married to me right off if I wished. She is pretty free with some other young men, which makes me jealous, and think she will break off with me, so I intend to marry her; and she being willing, we could live at home till we are of age. I hope you will oblige me in this matter." You are too young to be married. Besides, we think that a girl whose nature seems so inconstant is better lost than won.

Amy (Nevada) writes: "I am a young girl sixteen years of age. I have almost always lived in the country, and do not understand the rules of etiquette very well. If a young gentleman asks a young lady to accompany him to a picnic, when he calls for her, should the young lady have a lunch prepared, or should she leave that for the young man to see to?" The young lady should have the lunch prepared, and if it is as neatly done as your note, it may not be without its influence in imposing on the young man in turn, and ultimately the duty of providing, not a lunch merely, but three meals a day, for the young lady as well as himself.

H. N. (Kansas) writes: "In reading a will in which I am somewhat interested, I find the following clause: 'I give and bequeath to my son T. lot No. 81 in the town of ——, with all improvements on the same, together with the store-room and all the appurtenances.' The store-room is filled now with a stock of goods owned by the testator. Please give me your opinion as to whether the goods in the store would pass under the word 'appurtenances?'" No.

R. M.—The name of the fruit known as *strawberry* is supposed to have come from one of two sources, namely, the old English custom of laying straw between the rows of plants to preserve the fruit from rotting on the ground, or from the Anglo-Saxon *strae*, which means wandering, or running about, and from which we have our English verb *stray*. The strawberry plant *strays* or runs freely.

C. H. W. (Athol) asks: "Will the story, entitled 'A Bone of Contention,' by Mrs. Lewis, now running through your paper, be printed in book form? If so, by whom, and when? Please answer." No. Neither "A Bone of Contention," nor any other of Mrs. Lewis's stories, will ever be published in book form. Her stories can only be obtained in the columns of the *Ledger*.

M. G. writes: "Will you please tell me the meaning of *Mardi gras?* I see it has been celebrated in New Orleans, and I do not know what it means." *Mardi gras* is the French for Shrove Tuesday, which is the Tuesday preceding the first day of Lent, or Ash-Wednesday.

T. S. A. (Monticello).—The back numbers of the Boy Magician will cost ninety cents. They can be ordered through your newsdealer, or directly from this office.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*